

A HAPPY NEW YEAR FROM B&CP!

Bus & Coach

PRESERVATION

Inside this month:

SHEFFIELD UPDATE



55 YEARS ON THE BUSES



DESTINATION BLINDS



ENSIGN RUNNING DAY



Plus all the latest news and regular features galore!



A SENSE OF HISTORY

STAGECOACH SOUTH'S HERITAGE ON SHOW



Vol 21 No 9 FEBRUARY 2019 £4.75

BY INDUSTRY AND HONOUR

Situated between Sheffield and Doncaster, the steel town of Rotherham was noted for its single-ended trams which ran on the joint service to Sheffield and its single-deck trolleybuses, some of which were rebodied as double-deckers later in life. Rotherham's motorbus fleet was therefore somewhat overshadowed, and as a result only two complete such vehicles survive in preservation, these being an East Lancs-bodied Crossley DD42/7 and a Weymann-bodied Daimler CVG6.

Neither of these is currently located in South Yorkshire, the task of keeping the Rotherham flag flying falling to two recovery vehicles, an AEC Matador and cut down Roe-bodied Daimler CVG6 TET 135 converted in 1971.

Following the end of tram operation, the Sheffield-Rotherham service was extended to Doncaster resulting in buses from all three municipalities being evident in either of the two towns and the city.

Motorbuses had first been seen in Rotherham in 1913

and by the mid-1920s Bristol chassis had found favour, a situation which continued right up until nationalisation meant that the make was no longer available on the open

market. The undertaking turned initially to Crossley, then to AEC and Daimler to meet its needs, and it is examples of all three that are illustrated here.





LEFT: Rotherham invested in a total of 24 all-Crossley DD42/7s, the latter batch of 12 having a revised four-bay layout lacking the trademark Crossley stepped window line on both decks. New in 1951, No 205 (GET 505) was withdrawn in 1966.

ABOVE: Further 1966 arrivals comprised nine 70-seat Roe-bodied Daimler CVG6LXs. Numbered 59-67 (FET 59-67D), all passed to South Yorkshire PTE in 1974. Now renumbered 1267 in the SYPTE fleet, the former No 67 is seen bound for Sheffield.

MAIN PICTURE: No 130 (FET 130D) was one of three Neepsend-bodied AEC Regent Vs new in 1966. Seen here leaving Doncaster South bus station, No 173 was sold to Morris Bros of Swansea in 1974. Pictures: PRESBUS ARCHIVE



NEWS PLUS

The latest news from the world of bus preservation and beyond.

FOUR LEYLANDS AND A DENNIS

Stagecoach South is proud to celebrate its heritage through the retention of five historic vehicles as DAVID JUKES discovers.

RETURN JOURNEY: STAGECOACH PORTSMOUTH

We look at this short-lived operation from the purchase of Portsmouth Citybus to divestment and sale to Transit Holdings.



ON THE ROAD

DAVID JUKES presents this month's round up of mature buses still in action on the UK's roads.

ENSIGNBUS RUNNING DAY

MARTYN HUNT and CALUM MACLENNAN capture the action in Essex, East London and North Kent on 1 December.

PENNINE RUNNING DAY

CHRIS WHITEOAK reports on a glorious celebration of a much missed North Yorkshire operator.

WEST YORKSHIRE 90 AT THE SKIPTON RUNNING DAY

This year's Aire Valley event included a gathering of West Yorkshire vehicles. Words and pictures by CHRIS WHITEOAK.

COACHING CLASSICS: WESTERN MW

Western SMT DT1327 (LCS 207) was one of a batch of 52 Alexander-bodied Bristol MW6G coaches new in 1958.

PRESERVATION UPDATE: A TIGER AND A REGENT

SIMON GILL provides an update on the major restorations of former Sheffield JWE 416 and OWE 116 at the South Yorkshire Transport Museum.

RETURN JOURNEY: SHEFFIELD REGENTS

A round-up of some AEC Regents from the Sheffield 'A' and 'B' fleets caught on film mostly in the 1970s.



55 YEARS ON (AND WORKING UNDER) BUSES

David Powell has been everything from a Ribble apprentice to part-owner of Maidstone & District. NICK LARKIN meets him!

TALKIN' 'BOUT MY DESTINATION

'Who said that?' we ask as ASHLEY BLACKMAN looks at destination blinds in the latest instalment of his restoration series.

THE MODEL PAGE

NIGEL APPLEFORD examines Oxford Diecast's 1:76 scale Plaxton Panorama coach.

OFF ROUTE

Mystery National Bus Company subsidiaries, an extremely unusual private hire vehicle and searching for a bus song. Over to NICK LARKIN.

BUSMART

B&CP's comprehensive advertising section, where you can buy or sell any bus-related item.

Cover: **Saved by Southdown. This 1929 Brush-bodied Leyland Titan TDI was retained on withdrawal and passed through the National Bus Company and a management buy-out into the hands of Stagecoach in 1989, since when it has enjoyed a valued role in the Group's Heritage Fleet. Find out more on page 12.**
DAVID JUKES

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YARDLEY WOOD BUS CLUB

"Atlas Editions" Models £10 Each

BUS COLLECTION

JY-11 STEYR 380 1955
JY-14 LEYLAND RTW 1959
JY-24 IKARUS 311 1959
JY-25 VOLVO B375 1957
JY-26 MERCEDES BENZ LOP 3500 1935
JY-31 OPEL BLITZ 1954
JY-32 JEICZ 043 1959
JY-36 MERCEDES BENZ O 3500 1949
JY-38 SCHOOL BUS GMC B SERIES 1979
JY-40 MAGIRUS DEUTZ SATURN II 1964
JY-41 VETRA VBRH TROLLEYBUS 1948
JY-04 SAURER L4C 1959
JY-18 FIAT 306/3 INTERURBANO 1972
JY-22 REO SPEEDWAGON 1946
JY-17 IKARUS 66-1955
JY-35 RENAULT S45 R4210—1953
JY-34 KASSBOHRER SETRA S8—1951

IKARUS COLLECTION

JZ-01 IKARUS 311 1960
JZ-02 IKARUS 66 1955
JZ-06 IKARUS 620 1959
JZ-07 IKARUS 256 1977
JZ-08 IKARUS 30 1951

TRAMS & LOCOS

HQ-01 BLACKPOOL BALOON 1960
HQ-02 FELTHAM TRAM UCC 1931
HQ-03 BLACKPOOL RAILCOACH 1937
HQ-04 HONG KONG TRAM 1986
HQ-05 SAN FRANCISCO CABLE CAR
HQ-99 KROKODIL LOCO
HQ-98 SERIES CC 41010 LOCO
HQ-20 STUBAITALBAHN TWI 1904
HQ-24 ELEKTRISK MOTORVAGN 1902
HQ-30 ATELIERS DE BRUGES 1949
PLUS TRAINS OF THE WORLD
IN "Z" GAUGE SEE THE COMPLETE
LIST ON OUR WEBSITE

GREAT BRITISH BUSES

JB-01 LONDON TRANSPORT RTW
JB-02 SOUTHDOWN BRISTOL LODEKKA
JB-03 WALLACE ARNOLD BEDFORD OB
JB-04 LONDON TRANS. TROLLEYBUS
JB-05 SOUTHDOWN QUEEN MARY O/T
JB-06 BRADFORD CITY TRANS. DAIMLER
JB-10 BRIGHTON & HOVE AEC REGENT
JB-11 DOUGLAS CORP. AEC REGENT
JB-12 MIDLAND RED CM5T COACH
JB-13 BLACKPOOL BALOON TRAM
JB-14 GREEN LINE AEC Q TYPE
JB-15 TEESIDE SUNBEAM TROLLEYBUS
JB-16 WESTERN WELSH LEYLAND TIGER
JB-17 LYTHAM ST ANNES LEYLAND PD2
JB-18 RIBBLE BURLINGHAM SEAGULL
JB-19 LEEDS CITY TRANS. CROSSLEY
JB-20 WEST RIDING BEDFORD VAL
JB-21 LINCOLN LEYLAND TITAN
JB-22 HANTS & DORSET PANORAMA
JB-23 BLACKPOOL BRUSH RAILCOACH
JB-24 ST HELENS AEC REGENT V
JB-25 METROPOLITAN FELTHAM TRAM
JB-26 MIDLAND RED D9
JB-28 HULL CORP. TROLLEYBUS
JB-29 EAST YORKSHIRE BET
JB-30 MIDLAND RED WEST LEY. LYNX
CLASSIC COACHES COLLECTION
JE-01 WHITTLE BURLINGHAM SEAGULL
JE-02 WALLACE ARNOLD BEDFORD VAL
JE-03 RON DREW BEDFORD OB
JE-04 KINGS FERRY VAN HOOL T9
JE-05 KAESBOHRER SETRA S8
JE-08 IFA H6 B
JE-10 ALLANDER TRAVEL BOVA FUTURA
JE-11 EXCELSIOR PLAX. EXCALIBUR
JE-12 YORK PULLMAN VAN HOOL
JE-13 BORGWOOD BO 4000
JE14 MIDLAND RED CM5T COACH
JE-15 MERCEDES BENZ Q3500
JE-16 TRANS PEAK PLAX. PREMIERE
JE-17 VAN HOOL 306
JE-18 MAGIRUS DEUTZ SATURN II

1:76 OXFORD MODELS AVAILABLE

PD2-004 SAMUEL LEDGARD - LEYLAND TITAN (£18)
PD2-005 EDINBURGH - LEYLAND TITAN (£18)
IR6-001 TRANSLINK GOLDLINE - SCANIA IRIZAR IR6 COACH (£20)
IR6-003 KINGS FERRY - SCANIA IRIZAR IR6 COACH (£20)
IR6-004 GALLEON TRAVEL - SCANIA IRIZAR IR6 COACH (£20)
COM-007 SKYWAYS OF LONDON - COMMER COMMANDO (£15)
COM-008CC COCA COLA - COMMER COMMANDO (£15)
SB-001 RIBBLE - SARO BUS (£15)
SB-002 MAIDSTONE & DISTRICT - SARO BUS (£15)
SB-003 GREEN LINE - SARO BUS (£15)
BI-001 EAST KENT - BEADLE INTEGRAL (£15)
PAN-007 RIBBLE - PLAXTON PANORAMA (£15)
PAN-008 A TIMPSON & SON - PLAXTON PANORAMA (£15)
WFA-006 BIRCH BROTHERS - AEC WEYMANN FANFARE (£15)
WFA-007 NORTH WESTERN - AEC WEYMANN FANFARE (£15)
LRT-008 STANDERWICK - LEYLAND ROYAL TIGER (£15)
DR-005 RIBBLE - DUPLER ROADMASTER (£15)
BI-004 SOUTHDOWN - BEADLE INTEGRAL (£15)

1:76 CORGI MODELS AVAILABLE

40821A WILTS & DORSET - BRISTOL LODEKKA (38A Salisbury) (£30)
40821B WILTS & DORSET - BRISTOL LODEKKA (38A Bournemouth) (£30)
46515A BRIGHTON & HOVE - GEMINI ECLIPSE (29 Tunbridge Wells) (£30)
46515B BRIGHTON & HOVE - GEMINI WECLIST (21 Brighton Marina) (£30)
46615A ARRIVA LONDON - NBFL (137 Streatham Hill) (£25)
46615B ARRIVA LONDON - NBFL (137 Oxford Circus) (£25)
46618A STAGECOACH LONDON - NBFL (8 Bow Church) (£30)
46619A GO HEAD LONDON - NBFL (88 Camden Town) (£30)
46619B GO AHEAD LONDON - NBFL (88 Clapham Common) (£30)
89202GS BEST OF BRITISH BORISMASTER (£10)

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71003	Bus 2986 32 Gospel Lane JOJ 986	71503
71004	Bus 3009 52 Beeches Estate MOF 9	71504
71005	Bus 3000 56 Castle Bromwich LOG 300	71505
71006	Bus 2958 63 Rubery JOJ 958	71506
71007	Bus 2976 750 Wythall Bus Museum JOJ 976	71507

West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive Livery

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71009	Bus 2964 9 Quinton JOJ 964	71509
71010	Bus 2995 15 Blakenall JOJ 995	71510
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6508A NXWM (6843, SN66 WFM) X1 COVENTRY
6508B NXWM (6843, SN66 WFM) X1 BIRMINGHAM
6509 ABELLIO BUS (2600, YY67 GZW)
6510 YELLOW BUSES (200, SN17 MTO)
6511 STAGECOACH WEST SCOTLAND (10930, SN67 XAY)
6512 SOUTHERN VECTIS (1660, HW67 AHY)
6513 STAGECOACH SOUTH (10892, YX67 VCE)
6514 FIRST IN GLASGOW (33201, SK68 LWN)
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We would like to thank all our customers who have made 2018 a very successful year for YWBC. We are looking forward to 2019 but with less Rally Dates as we are all getting less active and older. Feel free to use our Mail Order service which according to the comments we receive is one of the best around. Our number one priority is you the CUSTOMER
Peter Turland, Secretary

2019

Feb 24th Swansea Bus Museum

Mar 23/24th Manchester Transport Museum

Apr 7th Brooklands Museum

April 21/22nd Transport Museum Wythall

May 5/6th Transport Museum Wythall

May 26/27th Transport Museum Wythall

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In with the new!

A very happy new year to all! As has become traditional at this time of the year, we like to look back and to look forward. 2018 was a different year for us. Not quite so many events including only one outdoor. Putting up and taking down our stand would have taken more physical effort than we were ever going to muster given my state of health, so we stuck to those indoors. Even then we needed help to unload and reload the van, and with a special mention to Hugh Jones, Dave Evans, John Arnold, and David Jukes, we would like to thank all of the event organisers and museum volunteers who rose to the challenge to make sure it was business as usual at the Presbus stand. Thanks too to the Llandudno Festival of Transport's Len Ricketts plus his family and friends who erected our gazebos at their event.

Unable to walk far, I did not get to see much of the bus displays, but I understand that by and large events were well attended and that a good time was to be had by one and all.

From our point of view, next year looks set to be similar, so we look forward to seeing you at an event near you!

It would seem that some of the better events were those we didn't attend, not to say of course that those we did were anything but first class. One event we

were sorry to have missed was the Pennine Running Day featured in this issue. To run buses over their former routes is something we should all aspire to, and to see three beautifully restored Pennine Motor Services together must have been a joy to behold. Maybe next year!

Now 20 years ago future excitement surrounding a Leyland National and a pair of Dennis Darts would have been nigh on impossible to contemplate, but times have changed. Many take the view that the proliferation of such vehicles reflects the ease with which they can be restored, voicing concern that there are many older vehicles out there that should warrant the attention and most importantly the cash spent. Sadly it is true that such vehicles exist in some numbers, but many are in the custody of preservationists who have reached a certain age and have already done their bit by restoring and maintaining what in some cases amounts to a small fleet.

It is unlikely that some of the gems out there will ever get restored, but we must persevere in saving vehicles from all eras up to and including those currently being withdrawn from service.

Finally a reminder to get them in! Nigel Appleford needs your event dates now — send them direct to Nigel at nigel.appleford@bt.com.



Picture: CHRIS WHITEOAK

Heritage Routemaster cuts

Plans by Transport for London (TfL) to cut its route 15H heritage Routemaster service from its current daily operation to summer weekends and bank holidays have recently emerged, writes DAVID JUKES. TfL asked selected stakeholders to comment but there has been no public consultation nor details published on TfL's website.

It was thought the planned reduction, previously part of plans to withdraw, curtail and restructure several central London bus routes leaked in August 2018, was dropped before the plans were formally published on 28 September.

Enthusiast and non-enthusiast alike are downcast and disappointed, with many

accusing TfL of acting in a secretive way and not advertising the service.

TfL said: 'The proposal to cut the 15 heritage service comes alongside the Mayor's proposed cuts to 33 bus routes in central London and will save £800,000 a year. The heritage buses provide an attraction for tourists that celebrates London's heritage, but the use of the service is low,' adding the restriction to times of peak demand would 'improve emissions while helping to reduce congestion.'

TfL has advised a decision regarding route 15H's future will be made in early-2019.

Picture: DAVID JUKES



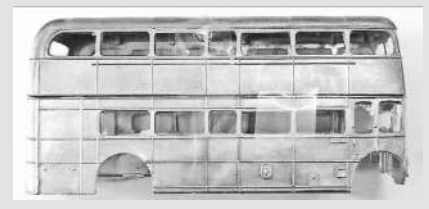
PMT Reliance saved

692 AEH, a 1957 Weymann-bodied AEC Reliance MU3RV bus new to Potteries Motor Traction (PMT) as its SN7692, has been saved by the Potteries Omnibus Preservation Society with assistance from the Southampton & District Transport Heritage Trust. It is intended the Reliance, which was kept in a Hampshire storage yard for many years, will be restored to its original PMT condition. Report: TOM LINGWOOD
Picture: ROY NAYLOR



Casting improvements

Bachmann has announced the RML Routemaster will be the next Exclusive First Editions casting to be upgraded. This casting is considered to capture the type's elegant lines very well but has lacked panel ribbing detail. This will now be added and other improvements made. Further details will be posted on its website: www.bachmann.co.uk.



Empress buys another J2

Empress Coaches of St Leonards on Sea has recently added a third Plaxton Embassy-bodied Bedford J2 coach to its heritage fleet.

644 HAA, which was new to Cook of Stoughton near Guildford with sister 643 HAA in 1963, remained with Cook until its 1974 sale to W. R. M. Wilkinson of Kettlewell near Skipton, North Yorkshire. It was dry-stored from its 1992 withdrawal until a December 2015 sale to Vallance's Coaches of Kirby in Ashfield, with which the J2 was restored to Class 6 standard.

644 HAA will join similar EXS 569F and PVV 888J on heritage and wedding work for its new owner. Sister 643 HAA also survives with Target Travel of Plymouth. Report: JOHN WAKEFIELD



644 HAA at Showbus in 2017. DAVID BEARDMORE

McGill's expands heritage fleet

McGill's of Greenock, Scotland's largest independent operator, has expanded its heritage fleet by restoring OSJ 631R, a 1977 Alexander AY-bodied Leyland Leopard new to Western SMT as its L2631.

Says Ralph Roberts, McGill's managing director: 'The bus operated from Johnstone Depot in the 1990s so is part of the company's history. There are drivers here that drove it back in the day.'

The Leopard's restoration was carried out in the company's workshops: 'There were quite a few challenges, but the Leopard was structurally solid, so it was mainly a case of stripping it back, cleaning and painting,' he adds. 'Items such as the wiper motors were overhauled, and the running gear was fully serviced.'

'Thanks go to the staff at Johnstone,' concludes Ralph. 'They were fabulous and obviously care as much as I do about the heritage of the business and industry.'

The McGill's heritage fleet is also home to 1952 Duple-bodied Guy Arab GVD 47,

a 1995 Marshall-bodied Mercedes 709 – which is next for restoration – and a 2003 Hispano-bodied Volvo B7L.

Report: NICK LARKIN

Right: **OSJ 631R seen before restoration.**

Below: **The immaculate newly-restored Leopard.** Pictures: McGill's



RTL50 commemoration

The 50th anniversary of London Transport's final RTL-type Leyland Titan withdrawal was commemorated with a celebratory run on 24 November. A selection of preserved RTLs ran over some of the type's former routes starting out from the Grade II*-listed Stockwell garage.

The London Bus Museum's RTL139,

Ensign's RTL453, Mike Ross's RTL554 and Peter Cousins' RTL1163 were later joined by Roger Wright's RTL1076 and a surprise visitor – RTL1105 which was repatriated by Roger Wright from Canada in 2008.

Photographs were taken at Bow garage, after which RTLs 1105 and 1163 headed

to Essex and the others visited Lewisham and London Bridge.

Thanks are due to the vehicle owners, especially Peter Cousins who brought RTL1163 from Devon to Stockwell, where his mother had conducted it in LT service, and Roger Wright for RTL1105.

Report: BOB WINGROVE



Picture: KEITH VALLA

Green Line Running Day

The Epping Ongar Railway will hold a Green Line Running Day on Sunday 24 February 2019 based at its North Weald Station. RT, RF, CRL, RCL, RP, SMA and XF-class vehicles will operate routes to local towns and villages – as will possibly a surprise or two.

Shuttle bus 718 will operate from Chingford Station at 10:00 at no additional cost and route 339 will operate between Epping and North Weald stations at

regular intervals. Bus Rover tickets will be available to purchase on the day (£10 adult and £5 child under 14) for travel on all bus routes and site access. These may be booked online from the Railway's website at reduced prices. Train and bus tickets will also be available at normal rates.

Please visit: www.eorailway.co.uk, telephone 01277 365200 or Facebook: Epping Ongar Railway for more details and tickets.



Picture: NIGEL APPLEFORD

Early Christmas present

The National Tramway Museum at Crich Tramway Village has bought former Barnsley & District Electric Traction Company Ltd No 5 (HE 12), a 1913 Leyland 'Combination Car' motorbus. The bus, restored to its original condition by Mike Sutcliffe MBE in 2006, has much historical importance and symbolises a significant chapter in the story of Britain's tramways which was not represented in the Museum's collection.

Crich Museum Curator Laura Waters says: 'We are delighted the bus will remain at the Museum as a permanent part of our collection. We are grateful for the kind generosity and support from the H.B. Allen Charitable Trust, Tramway Museum Society members, our visitors and others who have supported the project and allowed us to be able to make this valuable purchase.'

The Museum's thanks also go to Mike and Pat Sutcliffe who wanted the bus to have a permanent home at Crich. No 5 is the final project to receive funding from the H.B. Allen Charitable Trust.

Crich Tramway Village will re-open on Saturday 16 March 2019. For details call: 01773 854321 (Mon – Fri) or visit: www.tramway.co.uk.



Picture: THE NATIONAL TRAMWAY MUSEUM

Bedford SB for sale at £64,750 (+VAT!)

748 UYL, a 1955 Duple Vega-bodied Bedford SBG, was advertised on eBay in November for an eye-watering £64,750+VAT (£77,700 in total).

This coach was new as TUE 132, a 1956 Duple Vega-bodied Bedford SBG new to Hills of Stockingford, which later passed to Skills of Nottingham in 1989. It transpired the number plate and chassis number were swapped with those of 6 EBH, another Bedford SBG, in July 1998. The real 6 EBH was scrapped by early-2001.

TUE 132 – initially with 6 EBH plates – subsequently changed hands thrice, finishing up in July 2016 registered 748 UYL with Brent Cooper of New Zealand,

who had the interior refurbished at Eastgate Trimmers of Pickering. Mr Cooper planned to export the coach to New Zealand, but the country's authorities would not sanction its use as a PSV. The Bedford remains in the UK at Yaxley, near Peterborough, where it is advertised on Mr Cooper's behalf by Deckerbus.

Do note: the TUE 132 registration is still live at the DVSA, so it should be possible to get a V5c for the correct registration.

Report: JOHN WAKEFIELD

Picture: DAVID BEARDMORE



Back on the road after 55 years

Stagecoach in Lincoln has been praised for its assistance to help return a 1940 single-decker to the road for the first time in 55 years, writes NICK LARKIN.

FHN 833, an Eastern Coach Works (ECW)-bodied Bristol L5G, was new to United Automobile Services as its BLO133. It later received the body from sister BLO97 and was extensively rebuilt by ECW in 1951.

BLO133 was withdrawn in 1957 and spent its final working days carrying workmen from the Lincoln area to power stations for contract vehicle provider Alexander, trading as Greyhound. The Lincolnshire Vintage Vehicle Society (LVVS) bought the bus for preservation in 1963.

The Bristol, which was finally finished in September, made its return at the Society's Transport Festival on 4 November and was very well received.

The LVVS has many people and organisations to thank for their help but give a special mention to Stagecoach in Lincoln for its help over the years,

including a donation towards the project.

Please view www.lvvs.org.uk for further information about the Society and its collection.



Picture: TOM DEAKIN



Picture: MELVIN ALEXANDER

Ribble 100

2019 is the centenary of Ribble Motor Services' founding which will be marked by the Ribble Vehicle Preservation Trust on Sunday 26 May with a large event at Morecambe Football Club. It is hoped to have several Ribble and Standerwick vehicles on display alongside others representing each operator with which Ribble had joint operating agreements. Regular bus services will also be organised between Heysham and Carnforth.

There will also be artefact and photographic displays at Preston's Harris Museum between 19 January and 7 July and at Carnforth Heritage Centre (in the famous railway station) between 15 April and 7 July. Both will be aimed at the general public but will no doubt interest all. Visit www.rvpt.co.uk for more details.


Rydabus 3 – Southern Vectis 90

The Isle of Wight Bus Museum has announced its 2019 Rydabus Bus Running Days will be held on Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 May. The event will celebrate the 90th anniversary of Southern

Vectis bus services by offering free travel on a network of routes across the Island's north-east quarter. Routes start and finish at the Museum site, which is the old Southern Vectis depot in Park Road,

Ryde, and will be operated by up to 35 vintage buses and coaches.

For more details call 01983 567796 or visit www.iwbuseum.org.uk (please note the Museum is closed until Sunday 7 April).



RYDABUS

BUS RUNNING DAYS: 18 & 19 MAY 2019

Southern Vectis

90

Years of Service 1929 – 2019

Still thriving

Taunton-based Quantock Heritage is reporting an increase in business and has taken on more work after another local concern ceased trading, writes NICK LARKIN. Managing director Steve Morris has around 15 heritage vehicles available for Quantock Heritage, which covers an area approximately between Gloucester and Penzance, although vehicles are known to travel further afield.

Restoration and other work are carried out for third parties and the Quantock Heritage fleet, for which OD 7497, a 1934 ex-Devon General AEC Regent open-topper is currently being prepared

for service: 'More work has been coming in than ever before,' enthuses Steve. 'I think the idea of hiring a heritage vehicle for a wedding or special event is now in the minds of the public.'

Steve also confirms Quantock Heritage will run its route 300 Minehead to Lynmouth via Porlock heritage service on Mondays to Fridays during August and September 2019. For more details, please see www.quantockheritage.com or telephone 01984 624906.



Picture: QUANTOCK MOTOR SERVICES

New PECO Model Scene bus kits

The model railway manufacturer PECO has announced a new range of Model Scene 1:76 scale (OO) Leyland National and Leyland Olympian plastic bus kits that were previously produced by Tower Models. The Leyland National is available in the following forms: London Transport (Ref 5138), London Country (5139), Greater Manchester PTE (5140), Blackpool Corporation (5141), Red Vari-kit (5142) and Green Vari-kit (5143), and the Leyland Olympian as London Buses Riverside (5501), Metrobus (5502) and Blackpool Transport (5503). All are supplied with transfers (initially the same sets as the Tower Models issues although new sets are under production). RRP for the Nationals is £9.95 and the Olympians £10.75. More details at: www.peco.com.



Black & White Bristol

Ashley Blackman has acquired HDD 654, a 1948 Duple-bodied Bristol L6G new to Black & White Motorways as its No 111, from William Staniforth. A major restoration is planned and spare parts are needed, particularly for the interior. If you can help, please contact Ashley at: info@ashleyblackman.co.uk.



Picture: ASHLEY BLACKMAN

Routemaster Association at 30

The Routemaster Association was 30 years old on 30 December 2018. It was formed in 1988 with the aim of supporting new owners of this London icon following large-scale withdrawals from London service.

The Association's principal aims remain unchanged; to share knowledge and operating experience and provide technical information to owners. It has

also teamed up with engineering partners to remanufacture spare parts.

Chairman and co-founder Andrew Morgan says: 'It is incredible to think we have been helping owners keep Routemasters on the road for 30 years; we seem to be ageing but our vehicles are in incredible condition and fit for another 30 years.'

Members enjoyed a celebratory birthday cake at the recent 159 Anniversary Run, an annual event organised by the Association to commemorate the last full day of Routemaster operations on 8 December 2005 – members gather with their buses at the Ace Café every December for a re-run of route 159 route to Thornton Heath.



Routemaster Association Committee members cut the birthday cake at the Ace Café. From left to right: Technical Officer Tim Barrington, Chairman and co-founder Andrew Morgan and Events/ Press Officer David Lee.

ROUTEMASTER ASSOCIATION

West Midlands celebration

National Express West Midlands (NXWM) is gearing up to celebrate the 50th anniversary of West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive's 1969 formation, of which NXWM is a direct descendent. The operator has outshopped vehicles in the liveries of PTE constituents

Wolverhampton Corporation and Walsall Corporation; Birmingham City Transport and West Bromwich Corporation Transport-liveried buses will follow.

The latest revival has transformed a 2012 Wright Eclipse-bodied Volvo B7RLE into

the predominantly cream West Midlands PTE single-deck livery.

NXWM's heritage fleet will also help celebrate the 50th anniversary. This has recently been augmented by recently-acquired MOF 35, a 1953 Metro-Cammell-bodied Guy Arab, new to Birmingham City Transport,

which is being restored at into 1969 West Midlands PTE colours.

Confirms National Express Communications Manager Nikki Houghton: 'We are hoping to acquire another vehicle to celebrate the anniversary next year, but I am sworn to secrecy. But watch this space!'

Rapido Fleetline

Rapido Trains announced its second 1:76 Scale model bus, the West Midlands PTE (WMPTE) Leyland Fleetline, at this year's Warley National Model Railway Exhibition held at the NEC in November 2018. The WMPTE Fleetline fleet was second only in size to that of London Transport, with the last withdrawn under Travel West Midlands ownership in 1997.

The Rapido model will feature the same level of detail to be found on its Birmingham Guy Arab New Look (examples were displayed at the NEC) and will be offered with multiple front-end variations including



different indicator positions and grille arrangements.

We are promised 100% accurate proportions based on field measurements of KON 311P (which was itself present at the NEC and proved popular with visitors), accurately rendered body weld lines, extrusions and rivets, a full multi-coloured interior with no large posts, separate etched-metal interior grab poles, steerable front wheels with rubber tyres and flush-fitting windows.

Several routes and destinations will be available,

as will deluxe versions featuring working headlights, interior lighting and illuminated destination blinds

Paint schemes, pricing information

and order deadlines will be advised.

For further details, visit: www.rapidotrains.com.

Pictures: RAPIDO TRAINS



Picture: DAVID JUKES

Volunteer officers wanted

Restoration of GKE 68, the former Chatham & District Traction 1939 Weymann-bodied Bristol K5G is progressing such

that the Friends of Chatham Traction anticipate it will be completed in mid-2019 with a public launch during the summer.

The project is seeking individuals to help at this exciting phase as marketing and communications, education

and finance officers. These are unpaid roles, carried out as co-opted officers to the executive committee. For details see: www.chathamtraction.org.uk.

Sad news received shortly before we closed for press is the recent passing of Friends

founder member and former Trustee Bob Ratcliffe. A life-long enthusiast, he was one of the first to respond to a 2005 article seeking support for GKE 68's restoration and was a Trustee from the Charity's start until 2017.

Four Leylands and a Dennis

Stagecoach South is proud to celebrate its heritage through the retention of five historic vehicles as DAVID JUKES discovers.

The Stagecoach Group has come a long way since its 1980 formation. Its subsidiaries are actively encouraged to maintain links with the past by retaining historic vehicles; those brought into the Group with the purchase of individual bus companies and examples of the more recent, yet significant, Group purchases.

Stagecoach South is an amalgam of various Group acquisitions – Hampshire Bus (less the Southampton area operations sold to Southern Vectis), Southdown Motor Services (less the East Sussex operations divided between Brighton & Hove and Stagecoach South-East) plus the Guildford and Hindhead-based services of Q-Drive's Alder Valley. The Portsmouth area network is essentially built around those Southdown and Portsmouth City Transport assets not divested to Transit Holdings.

Below: **Southdown Leylands 135 and 813 bask in the summer sunshine at the Southsea Common-based Southdown Centenary Event on 7 June 2015.**

Pictures: DAVID JUKES

THE FAMOUS FIVE

There are currently five members of the Group's historic bus and coach fleet in Stagecoach South's custody, the oldest pair of which were acquired with Southdown Motor Services in August 1989. They are, in age order with Group national fleet numbers: 19945 (CD 7045), a 1922 Leyland G7 with 1928 Short Bros bodywork; 19913 (UF 4813), a 1929 Brush-bodied Leyland Titan TD1; 19909 (409 DCD), a 1964 Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Titan PD3/4; 14951 (F601 MSL), a 1988 Alexander RL-bodied Leyland Olympian; and 32501 (J501 GCD), a 1991 Alexander Dash-bodied Dennis Dart.

The G7, TD1 and Dart are usually housed at Portsmouth, the PD3 at Chichester and the Olympian at Basingstoke.

Colin Ashcroft, Portsmouth's Operations Manager, is responsible for co-ordinating their use and ensuring they are kept in the public eye as much as is practicably possible. Their maintenance is assisted by Richard Alexander, who is employed on a part-time consultancy basis after retiring as Stagecoach South's Engineering Director in 2015 after 50 years' service with Southdown and its successors.

'I have been associated with the G7 and TD1 for many years,' he enthuses. 'Both were based at Portslade Works – the TD1 from around 1967 and the G7 from 1970 – and were later inherited by Southdown West Sussex, where I was based, on the Company's 1985 operational division because no-one else had a connection with them.'

UF 4813

The former Southdown 813 (UF 4813) was one of the Company's first batch of Leyland Titan TD1s delivered in 1929 as Nos 801-823 (UF 4801-4823) with 51-seat open-top Brush bodies. The choice of open-top bodywork was curious given enclosed Titans were being built at that time for other operators, although Short Bros built similar open-top bodies on TD1 chassis for Maidstone & District and Hants & Dorset.

The Southdown open-toppers were displaced to seasonal duties by pre-war deliveries of new enclosed Titans but were given a new lease of life in 1941. Vehicle shortages in the Second World War caused Southdown to fit waterproof stretched-canvas top covers, thus enabling their all-year use until hostilities ceased. Peace saw the roofs removed and a return to seasonal work.





Above and below: **Southdown**, along with Hants & Dorset and Maidstone & District, favoured open-top bodywork for its earliest Leyland Titan TDI deliveries. No 813 was so-bodied by Brush and was eventually displaced to seasonal duties by the subsequent arrival of enclosed Titan TD deliveries.



Right: **A 2016 rear-axle oil leak required the removal of 813's differential. Replacement seals were fitted to the differential casing where the driveshafts pass through before reassembly.** All three: RICHARD ALEXANDER

No 813 was retained by Southdown for preservation and publicity purposes on the type's replacement by open-top-converted utility Guy Arabs in the early-1950s. The Titan retained a PSV ticket for several years and was loaned to the Amberley Museum-based Southdown Omnibus Trust in 2006.

There it remained for four years: 'The Trust was struggling to get 813 through its annual tests so was brought back to Stagecoach,' says Richard. 'The brakes were relined and profile ground to match existing drums, and the bus passed a Class 5 MoT – although more recently it has not

needed testing owing to its age.

'We experienced a rear-axle oil leak in 2016 and had to remove the differential to deal with it,' he continues. 'That has never been done before but it enabled us to replace two failed leather seals.'

The Titan's lower saloon has recently been retrimmed; the seat cushions during its Amberley loan period, and the seat backs in 2016 by a local concern. No 813 remains an active ambassador within Stagecoach South's operating area and beyond – Stagecoach Group Chairman Sir Brian Souter has called upon it for London-based events.



Above: **No 813's lower saloon is very well appointed, with smoking restricted to the bench seats behind the intermediate bulkhead. The upper-deck is far more rudimentary given its all-year use when the Titan was new. The battery beneath the rearmost seat powers a warning beacon – an essential addition when travelling on 21st century roads.**



CD 7045

Southdown 135 (CD 7045) was one of 14 Leyland G7s delivered in 1921 with a mixture of body manufacturers and types. Between them, Dodson, Harrington and Tilling provided single-deck saloon, open-top double-deck and single-deck charabanc bodywork – No 135 receiving a 27-seat Harrington charabanc body which was replaced in 1928 by its current Short Bros 51-seat double-deck bodywork.

It was one of six rebodied Leyland G7 and N-types sold by Southdown in 1934 to the Gosport & Fareham Omnibus Company (better known by its Provincial

Right: **No 135 marries a 1921 Leyland G7 chassis with 1928 Short Bros bodywork. The high quality of its 2014/15 repaint in traditional Southdown colours is evident.**

Below: **No 135's lower saloon is very conservative, especially when one considers the original production all-Leyland Titan TDI was being built in numbers during 1928, the same year Short Bros rebodied this Leyland G7.**



trading name) for further service as its No 20. CD 7045 was the last in service – by then renumbered 2 – when withdrawn in 1946 and set aside.

It was restored in 1952/53, named 'Old Bill' and used for publicity in 1950s-style Provincial livery until the mid-1960s.

The sale of the Provincial undertaking to the National Bus Company on 1 January 1970 led to the G7's transfer back to Southdown and a return to the famous apple green and primrose livery at Portslade Works. No 135 later spent a ten-year period at the Scottish Vintage Bus Museum before its return to Chichester in 2013 by which time the Museum volunteers were experiencing a few difficulties with its mechanics.

'When 135 came back we were able to get it going and successfully took part in the 2013 HCVS London to Brighton Run,' states Richard. 'We replaced a burnt valve

some time later, possibly the result of a long-standing cooling issue dating back to the 1970s when whilst being overhauled the radiator's tanks were found to be corroded and new copper inner tanks were inserted. Subsequent corrosion over the years saw the copper tanks crushed and the coolant capacity reduced by 25%. Both top and bottom tanks were replaced with new cast tanks.

'No 135 has not been well since 2015 because of an electrical issue we are keen to address this winter. It had to be towed to the Southdown centenary event on Southsea Common after happily running to Goodwood and around Chichester the day before, which was most frustrating.

'The bus isn't the easiest to drive,' Richard admits. 'It has a cone clutch, which is either in or out, a four-speed gate-change gearbox and a very powerful engine thanks to its 6-inch diameter

pistons and First World War technology. It does have incredible torque and will just keep going, very slowly and steadily.'

No 135 is being prepared for its centenary in 2021 and has benefitted from a complete external and internal repaint by Graham Kent and Dean Jackson at Chichester during 2014/15.

409 DCD

Some 285 full-front forward-entrance Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Titan PD3/4 and PD3/5 buses were acquired by Southdown between 1958 and 1967. Thirty of these were built as convertible open-toppers to replace the last of the Guy Arab open-top conversions in 1964/65 as Nos 400-429 (400-424 DCD / BUF 425-429C).

Their versatility ensured a long and active Southdown life beyond that of their fixed-roof sisters, with Nos 409 and 424 surviving into Stagecoach South ownership in traditional colours.

'The Managing Director and I had a passion to keep one of the 400s as we joined Southdown at the same time,' recalls Richard. 'We moved a number of the batch into West Sussex at deregulation to help meet a greater workload – they were ideal for schools and works duties.

'Ultimately we kept 409, but found it impractical to keep removing and replacing its roof. Crane hire is expensive, and the detached roof took up a vehicle



Left: **No 409 is a very popular member of Stagecoach South's heritage fleet and carries out a wide range of duties. It is seen at Bar End, Winchester, during the 2016 Friends of King Alfred Buses Running Day on 1 May.**

Top: **On home territory during the 2017 Southsea Spectacular on route from Eastney to Southsea Common on 11 June. The fine lines of its Northern Counties bodywork are equally evident from the rear.**

space, so it is maintained as a permanent open-topper.'

No 409 received a full rebuild at Chichester in 2009/10. Both decks were refloored and its exterior panelling and ash frame inserts repaired and replaced as necessary. The engine was also overhauled at Chichester, with new pistons, bearings and sleeves fitted – work that would have been carried out every six years at Portslade Works during the Titans' prime Southdown years.

The overhauled bus was taken to Winchester and repainted in traditional Southdown livery within Stagecoach South's own paintshop. 409 DCD remains a popular vehicle for a host of duties, not least for the annual Goodwood Revival when it is joined by other heritage vehicles from Stagecoach and beyond to operate between the motor racing circuit and Chichester railway station.

J501 GCD

The fourth addition to the Stagecoach South heritage vehicle ranks is the newest and sole single-decker. The bus industry's desire to match vehicle size with passenger demand led to the midibus, initially in the form of the Dennis Dart.

The Stagecoach Group's first Dart order, to 9.8m length with Alexander Dash bodywork, was destined for Stagecoach South. The first of these – No 501 (J501 GCD) – was delivered to Chichester in December 1991 for an official launch.

It wore Southdown fleetnames for that single day before brief evaluation usage then dispatch to Hastings where the first 20 were based. 'The new buses were intended to have a great effect on the town's operations,' recalls Richard. 'But

Centre: **No 501 is pictured on Southsea seafront while operating between The Hard Interchange and the Southsea Common rally site during the 2015 Southdown Centenary event.**

Bottom: **Alexander's Dash bodywork was built primarily for Stagecoach to a relatively square profile when compared to the bodybuilder's previous output. No 501 is seen in Horsham on 9 May 2010, a town which used to be a Southdown stronghold.**



we immediately ran into problems with their grounding at road junctions located at the foot of various hills within the town.

'Vehicles went back to the factory and held up deliveries while attempting to find a solution,' he continues. 'The manufacturer inserted packers into the suspension and vehicles were brought

down with test weights while we determined the worst locations. But the final solution was to simply trim the front and rear panels to improve clearances.'

No 501 spent most of its working life at Hastings before moving west to Worthing where it received a familiar apple green and primrose-based livery to





No 501 survived to be one of the fleet's last step-entrance Darts in 2006 and was considered a natural choice for the Group's heritage collection, receiving its original livery – complete with Southdown fleetnames – in 2007. It is currently the busiest of the five as it sees regular use at Portsmouth on staff transport duties to Stagecoach South's driver training centre at Winchester – the operational interests of the garage's employees no doubt playing a big part.

F601 MSL

The most recent addition to Stagecoach South's heritage ranks is the first Group-standard Leyland Olympian. Twenty long-wheelbase Alexander RL-bodied buses were ordered for the Hampshire Bus and United Counties subsidiaries as Nos 201-206 (F601-606 MSL) for the former and Nos 620-633 (F620-633 MSL) for the

commemorate the centenary of the town's public transport in 2004 (the Sussex Motor Road Car Ltd, predecessor of Worthing Motor Services and Southdown

Motor Services was founded in 1904). The livery was modified the following year to commemorate Southdown's 90th anniversary.



Top: 32501 is seen wearing its Southdown 90th anniversary commemorative livery in Chapel Road, Worthing, while still in Stagecoach South frontline service on 6 March 2007.

Above: Hampshire Bus's Alexander RL-bodied Olympians were a regular sight at Winchester's bus station during their service lives. No 201 departs during the 2017 Friends of King Alfred Running Day, a manoeuvre which is no longer possible with the reversal of vehicle flows through the remodelled bus station.

Left: No 201 at Showbus 2011, soon after its restoration at Portsmouth, alongside Megadekka F110 NES, which is also part of the Stagecoach Group's heritage fleet and is based at Bedford.



latter – these were also the first new buses bought by Stagecoach for its business outside Scotland.

No 201 spent its entire 22-year service life based at Basingstoke and was one of the final Leyland Olympians remaining in Stagecoach service. A greater interest in newer Volvo Olympians by the second-hand market provided Managing Director Andrew Dyer with the ideal opportunity to sanction 201's retention as a companion to Dart 501.

It was moved to Portsmouth in 2011 where both floors were replaced, and its interior refurbished – the soft trim reverting to the exact style used in the 1980s and 90s – before repainting in its original Stagecoach stripes livery. Original Stagecoach-style Hampshire Bus fleetnames were recreated with the assistance of the Company's marketing team and are still carried today. No 201 is currently back at Portsmouth from its Basingstoke home for the fitting of a replacement gearbox – its existing unit was damaged beyond economic repair by water leaking into the gearbox oil.

THE FUTURE

Space issues are likely to prevent further additions to Stagecoach South's heritage ranks – the oldest Leylands are kept at Portsmouth within a workshop alcove of insufficient size for anything larger – with different levels of interest apparent on the main fleet's vehicles.

No 18510, a 2006 Alexander Dennis ALX400-bodied Trident, was both the first of its type for the Coastliner 700 service and representative of the Group's final delivery of ALX400-bodied vehicles. It is a contender but, as such, is heavily reliant upon the will of the Company's directors.

Speaking in late-2017, Stagecoach South Managing Director Edward Hodgson said: 'It is great to have the Southdown Leyland G7 and TD1, but also the PD3 and more modern vehicles. The first-generation Darts were such an important vehicle for Stagecoach South, while the Olympian was key to the Group's development.'

We cannot argue with that, so do look out for these fine vehicles at rallies, running days and other events in and around the Stagecoach South operating area in 2019 and beyond.

Our thanks to Richard Alexander, Colin Ashcroft and Steve Thorpe for their kind assistance and hospitality.



Nos 135 and 813 are kept in this workshop alcove at Stagecoach South's Portsmouth depot – the workshop team kindly pushed No 135 forward to enable this photograph.



Sixty-two years separate the TDI and Dart. Who knows how the latter will compare with a typical bus of 2053?

Nos 135 and 813 are fitted with open-top and staircase bodywork built a year apart – the former's earlier chassis origin is evidenced by the entry step arrangement and higher platform. Both are fitted with folding doors to retain interior heat and keep out the cold on less than perfect days.



STAGECOACH Portsmouth



The Stagecoach Group's acquisition of Southampton Citybus's share in Portsmouth Citybus on 20 October 1989, and that of its employees the following week, led to the formation of Stagecoach Portsmouth. It was absorbed by Southdown on 1 January 1990 and a new Stagecoach Southdown Portsmouth trading name adopted until the sale of Southdown's Portsmouth Division to Transit Holdings on 19 January 1991 – the result of a directive from Nicholas Ridley, the then Secretary for Trade and Industry, for Stagecoach to divest itself of these operations.



Top: **The City of Portsmouth** acquired three dual-purpose Leyland National 2s in 1980 as its Nos 98-100 (CPO 98-100W) which passed through Portsmouth Citybus into Stagecoach ownership. They were re-numbered 140-142 to avoid duplicating the fleetnumbers of Southdown's National fleet; the first of these is seen in a wet Edinburgh Road on 10 February 1990 carrying the initial Stagecoach Portsmouth fleetname.



Centre: **Thirty-seven** former City of Portsmouth Alexander AL-bodied Leyland Atlanteans were transferred to Stagecoach Southdown control on 1 January 1990 for continued operation – a further 48 were not used. 1979-built No 342 (YBK 342V), seen turning from Edinburgh Road into Stanhope Road on 6 April 1990, was one of a few ex-Portsmouth Atlanteans retro-fitted under Stagecoach ownership with little-used front nearside route number displays.

Bottom: **Stagecoach Southdown** realised investment in new buses for its Portsmouth operations was essential and allocated eight of its first ten Alexander RL-bodied Leyland Olympians to Eastney. A brand new 702 (G702 TCD) is seen at Eastney Depot on 6 April 1990.



Top left: **Portsmouth Citybus** acquired a dozen Leyland Nationals from London Buses in 1989 – ten for service and two for spares. Loading in Edinburgh Road under subsequent ownership on 9 April 1990 is 202 (THX 211S), new to London Buses as its LS211 in 1978.

Top right: **The Stagecoach Southdown Portsmouth fleet** also included several ex-Southdown vehicles including this 1980 Leyland National 2, seen at South Parade Pier on 11 April 1990. No 124 (DSV 943) was originally registered HFG 924V.



Upper: **Carrying Stagecoach Portsmouth and Southdown Portsmouth fleetnames** is former City of Portsmouth 333 (UOR 333T), a 1978 Alexander AL-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68/IR. Pictured in Edinburgh Road on 13 June 1990, this was the first ex-Portsmouth Citybus vehicle to receive Stagecoach stripes.



Lower: **An October 1986 exchange with Ribble** saw 19 Leyland Nationals and four Eastern Coach Works (ECW)-bodied Bristol VRT/SL3s head south to Southdown's Hampshire Division. The latter included 1980-vintage DBV 29W, originally Ribble 2029 but renumbered 229 by its new owner, seen loading in Edinburgh Road on 27 July 1990.

Bottom: **Numerically the last new dual-door ECW-bodied Bristol VRT/SL3 for Southdown** was its 672 (AAP 672T) of 1979. It is seen in Commercial Road on 27 July 1990 after the removal of its centre exit doors. The bus was readily recognisable to the more knowledgeable enthusiast owing to its uniquely-sized destination box; the result of an earlier experimental digital display.





Top: The likelihood of Stagecoach Portsmouth's divestment in the latter part of 1990 saw several buses appear in overall white with Southdown Portsmouth fleetnames. Former City of Portsmouth 335 (YBK 335V), a 1979 Alexander AL-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68/IR, is seen so-attired in Commercial Road on 3 October 1990.

Centre: Stagecoach transferred six 1975-built ex-Grampian Alexander AL-bodied Leyland Atlantean AN68/IRs to Portsmouth in December 1989 from the defunct Frontrunner North West fleet of East Midlands Motor Services. All operated in the latter's green and cream livery before repainting in corporate Stagecoach livery (five) and plain white (one) during 1990. No 317 (KSA 183P), originally Grampian Regional Transport No 183, is seen in Commercial Road on 3 October 1990.



Below left: Ex-Ribble and Southdown 783 (CBV 783S), a 1978 Leyland National, received an overall white livery in 1990. With Southdown Portsmouth fleetnames applied to its windscreen and forward saloon windows, the bus passes along Milton Road on 3 November 1990.

Below: Sister 781 (CBV 781S) was earmarked for disposal to Transit Holdings with the ex-Portsmouth and Grampian Atlanteans plus reallocated ageing Hastings & District stock as Stagecoach moved its chosen vehicles from the Portsmouth Division. It is seen at Eastney Depot with window-mounted Southdown Portsmouth fleetnames on 17 January 1991.



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DAVID JUKES presents this month's round up of mature buses still in action on the UK's roads.



IN REMEMBRANCE

Taking part in Accrington's Remembrance Sunday Parade on 11 November is the Buckland Omnibus Company's former Accrington Corporation 57 (TE 7870), a 1929 petrol-engined Brush-bodied Dennis E-type. The Corporation's distinctive dark blue and red livery is believed to be based on the East Lancashire Regiment's uniform to commemorate the 'Accrington Pals', who suffered terrible losses at the 1916 Battle of the Somme.

Picture: CHRIS NEWTON



SAFeway LEOPARD

Operating free heritage bus services in conjunction with the Portsmouth-based Vintage Transport Group's Autumn Transport Fair on 11 November is TYD 911W, a 1980 Duple Dominant-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3F/5R new to Safeway Services of South Petherton. Picture: ADRIAN WILLATS



WALTERS OLYMPIANS

The Walters of Oxford fleet includes this pair of Olympians for use on schools' contracts. F845 ENV, the oldest all-Leyland Olympian left in regular use, was part of a first batch of six ordered by the Isle of Man Passenger Transport Board and was initially fitted with coach seating and registered BMN 88G. It was shipped to the Isle of Man after display at the 1988 Motor Show and saw 17 years' service before purchase by Geoff Amos of Daventry for further use. P353 ROO is one of nine single-door East Lancs Pioneer-bodied Volvo Olympians delivered to Harris Bus of Thurrock in 1997 for London Buses contracts. The routes and buses were taken over by London Buses' East Thames Buses division in late-1999 and this Olympian remained in use until mid-2003. P353 ROO (and sister R358 XVX) went to Marshall of Sutton-on-Trent, remaining until their late-2016 sale to Walters.

Pictures: CHRIS MARTIN



WEST LOTHIAN SCHOOLS

Seen in contrasting Livingstone weather in August 2018 are two former Stagecoach Alexander RL-bodied Volvo Olympians in the E&M Horsburgh of Pumpherston fleet. N725 LTN was new to Busways in 1996 as its No 725 and S308 CCD was new to Sussex Coastline in 1998 as its No 308. Both were later transferred to Stagecoach West Scotland with which they received their current yellow 'Skool Bus' liveries.

Pictures: ROGER HALL





BLACK CAT TRAVEL

Attending the Lincolnshire Vintage Vehicle Society's Autumn Open Day on 4 November are two contrasting vehicles from the fleet of Lincoln-based Black Cat Travel. RGV 284N, a 1974 Willowbrook-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3B/4R new to Heddingham and District as its L84, forms part of its current owner's heritage fleet. K666 BCT 'Tigger' is a DAF DB250-based Optare Spectra new to Wilts & Dorset as its 3126 (LI26 ELJ) in 1994.

Pictures: CALUM MACLENNAN



ON HEATH COMMON

Participants at the West Riding Bus Group's Heath Common event in Wakefield on 8 July included Yesteryear Coaches of Baildon 267 (BUF 267C), a 1965 Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Titan PD3/4 new to Southdown Motor Services. It was converted to open-top form by Wallace Arnold after its 1995 purchase from Weardale Motor Services of Stanhope. Picture: ANTHONY HICKS

READING RECALLED

The Thames Valley and Great Western Omnibus Trust-organised Thames Valley & Reading Running Day on 3 June proved to be very successful. Recreated routes, including those of Reading's trolleybuses, were operated by several vehicles including former Reading 4 (MRD 147), a 1957 Park Royal-bodied AEC Regent III seen in Park Lane, ex-Reading 38 (NDP 38R), a 1976 Northern Counties-bodied Bristol VRT/LL3 turning in Northumberland Avenue, and former Thames Valley 748 (JRX 823), a 1955 Eastern Coach Works-bodied Bristol KSW6B passing along Kings Road.

Pictures: MARK LYONS



ENSIGNBUS RUNNING DAY



The 2018 Ensignbus Running Day saw several vehicles operate routes X21 (Upminster to Ongar via Brentwood), X55 (Upminster to Gravesend via Lakeside Shopping Centre) and X81 (Shenfield to Tilbury Ferry via Lakeside and Grays) on 1 December. MARTYN HUNT and CALUM MACLENNAN photographed some of the day's action.

Left: Laying over in a wet Brentwood High Street is JCK 892, a 1956 Burlingham Seagull-bodied Leyland Tiger Cub PSUC1/2 new to Ribble Motor Services as its No 980, which is part of the Ensignbus heritage fleet. MARTYN HUNT



Above: A special visitor seen in Brentwood High Street is Stagecoach West 201 (JOU 160P), a 1975 Eastern Coach Works-bodied Bristol VRT/SL3 new to Bristol Omnibus as its No 5030. The Bristol has been part of the Stagecoach Historic Bus & Coach fleet since 2004 and was transferred back to Cheltenham ten years later.

Right: Daimler CWA6 GLX 913 was new to London Transport in 1944 as its D27 fitted with a Duple utility body. It passed to Southend Transport in 1953 and was rebodied by Massey the following year. No 263, owned by Ensignbus since 2011, is seen in Brentwood High Street bound for Tilbury Ferry. Both: MARTYN HUNT





Top: Awaiting departure from Shenfield railway station is the London Bus Museum's former London Transport RLH48 (MXX 248), a 1952 Weymann-bodied AEC Regent III. Behind is Ensignbus' ex-London Transport DMS2646 (THX 646S), a 1978 Park Royal-bodied Leyland Fleetline FE30ALR Sp. CALUM MACLENNAN



Above: Former BEA 1097 (MLL 738), a 1953 Park Royal-bodied AEC Regal IV, now part of the Byeways Vintage Bus Hire fleet, loads in Brentwood High Street. CALUM MACLENNAN



Above right: Taking the descent at Upminster railway station is former Southend Transport 233 (MRJ 233W), a 1981 Northern Counties-bodied Leyland Fleetline FE33ALR which was new in dual-doored form, and now forms part of the Ensignbus heritage fleet. CALUM MACLENNAN

Right: Laying over at Upminster railway station between X21 duties is Ensignbus FFN 451, a 1951 Park Royal-bodied Leyland Royal Tiger PSU1/13 new to East Kent. MARTYN HUNT





Above: **Seaford and District's former Maidstone and District 2816 (OKO 816G), a 1968 dual-purpose Willowbrook-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3A/4R, approaches Upminster Station.**

Right: **Following the Leopard into Upminster railway station a short time later is Ensignbus' former London Transport MI (THX 101S), a 1978 MCW Metrobus DR101/3.**

Both: CALUM MACLENNAN



Below: **Showing a 'Not in Service' ultimate blind is Ensignbus' former London Transport RTL453 (KLB 648), a 1949 Park Royal-bodied Leyland Titan 7RT, which is about to take up service on route X55. The RTL is hotly-pursued by Arriva's DW 218 on route 370 in Station Road Upminster.**

MARTYN HUNT



Pennine Running Day

CHRIS WHITEOAK reports on a glorious celebration of a much missed North Yorkshire operator.



Pennine Motors ceased trading in 2014 following 89 years service, but on Saturday 13 October last, hourly free bus services ran again from Skipton bus station to Embsay, Carleton and round the Horse Close circular route in Skipton. Extra 'Pennine' buses also ran from Skipton to Settle and Malham, supplementing the existing service operated by Kirkby Lonsdale Coach Hire. Here are some of the highlights.

Above: Former Pennine buses ready for the start of the day in Skipton bus station.

Right: Tim Moody's Pennine Leyland National LN19 picks up passengers on the first Carleton service.

Below: John Wright's Pennine Dennis Dart D15 on Horse Close service.





Leyland National LN19 heads back to Skipton on the 212 service.





WEST YORKSHIRE 90

at the Skipton Running Day

This year's Aire Valley event included a gathering of West Yorkshire vehicles. Words by DAVID HUDSON and pictures by CHRIS WHITEOAK.

The annual Yorkshire Dales Running Day takes place in Skipton, the gateway to the Dales. Although considered by many to be an unlucky number, the 13th event actually saw an increase in the number of entrants which usually hovers

around the 50 mark, though on the day some of those entered didn't arrive, yet others who hadn't did, so there was about 60 vehicles in total which for an event in the area is quite a good attendance. Skipton's position midway between the Greater Manchester, Lancashire and West Yorkshire conurbations always draws a wide variety of vehicles, some of which are not regularly seen in other areas.

The organisers always try to theme the event and this year the 90th anniversary of the West Yorkshire Road Car Co which was formed in January 1928 was celebrated. It had been hoped to bring together most of the preserved WYRCC vehicles, but as usual this was thwarted somewhat by driver availability on the day as often owners are also employees of local

Above: **Bristol MW6G coach WYRCC CUG 27 (8124 WX)** attended from the North East Bus Museum.

Left: **The Aire Valley Transport Group provided Bristol RELH6G WYRCC CRG6 (TWW 766F)** which has recently returned to the rally scene.



Top: **Harrogate & District-liveried Alexander Strider-bodied Volvo B10B was kindly provided by Connexion Buses of Tockwith.**

Centre: **The oldest vehicle present was all-Leyland Lion KW 1961 which, whilst delivered to Blythe & Berwick in 1927, ran for WYRCC until 1932.**

Bottom: **The newest vehicle from the WYRCC fleet was Mick Pearson's Leyland Olympian B521 UWW in Yorkshire Coastliner livery.**

operators and cannot always escape for the day. We did, however, manage to attract the Bristol MW coach from the North East, thanks to its custodian Peter Elliott of the North East Bus Museum who managed to find a driver for the day.

The Aire Valley Transport Group provided Bristol RELH6G WYRCC CRG 6 (TWW 766F) which has returned to the rally scene after a prolonged absence and is now in the ownership of Greg Lawson. Also present was Bedford OB FWW 596 now in its 46th year with its present owner David Hudson, and pseudo WYRCC 832 an ex-United Counties Bristol KSW now in West Yorkshire livery.

The oldest vehicle present was KW 1961 which, whilst delivered to Blythe & Berwick in 1927, ran for WYRCC until 1932 when it was sold to Jersey Motor Transport. The newest vehicle from the WYRCC fleet was Mick Pearson's Leyland Olympian B521 UWW in Yorkshire Coastliner livery. Also present was a Harrogate & District-liveried Volvo kindly provided by Connexion Buses





of Tockwith as an example of developments after privatisation.

Together with examples from the Ribble fleet, some of the Lancashire municipalities, and other AVTG vehicles such as the Royal Blue L6A and the recently acquired Eastern National KSW open topper attended. Services were provided to Gargrave, Embsay (to connect

with the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway) Bolton Abbey, Ilkley, Kildwick and Crosshills. A fairly intensive service was provided on the day.

All in all the event was well received and attendances were good so why not put the event in your diary for next year and make a weekend of it? There are plenty of transport attractions in the area, and

Skipton itself offers a traditional shopping centre with a market on Saturday to keep other members of the family occupied!

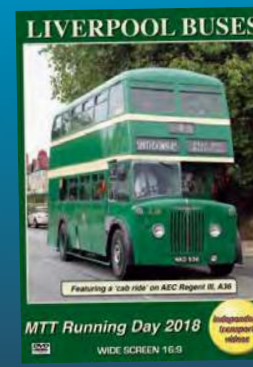
The Aire Valley Transport Group's recently acquired Eastern National KSW WNO 480.

Haslingden No 2, a Leyland Tiger PSI with Burlingham bodywork departs the rally site.



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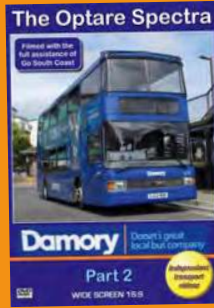
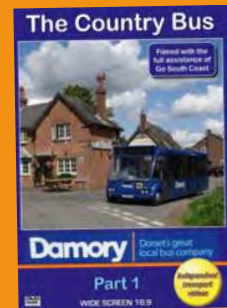
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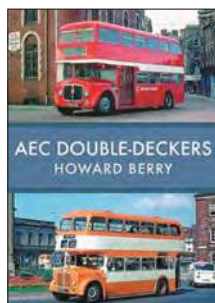
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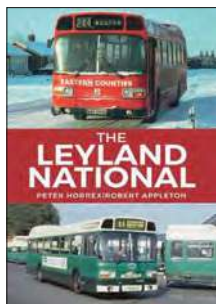
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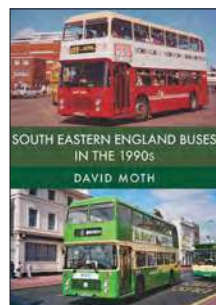


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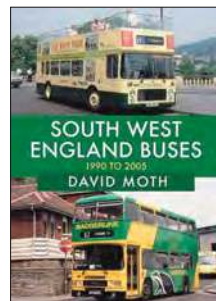
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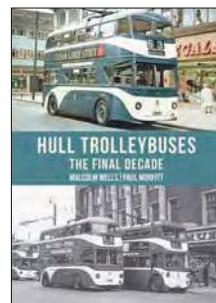
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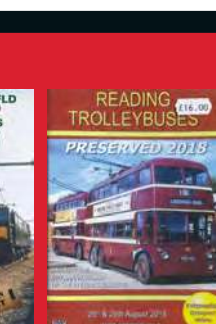
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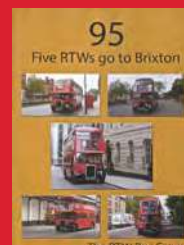
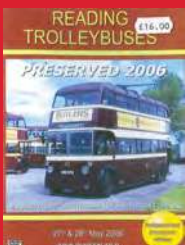
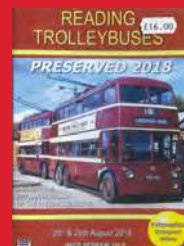
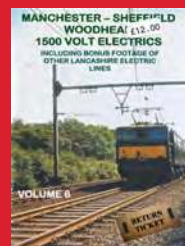
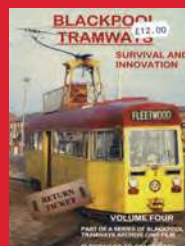
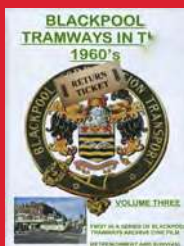


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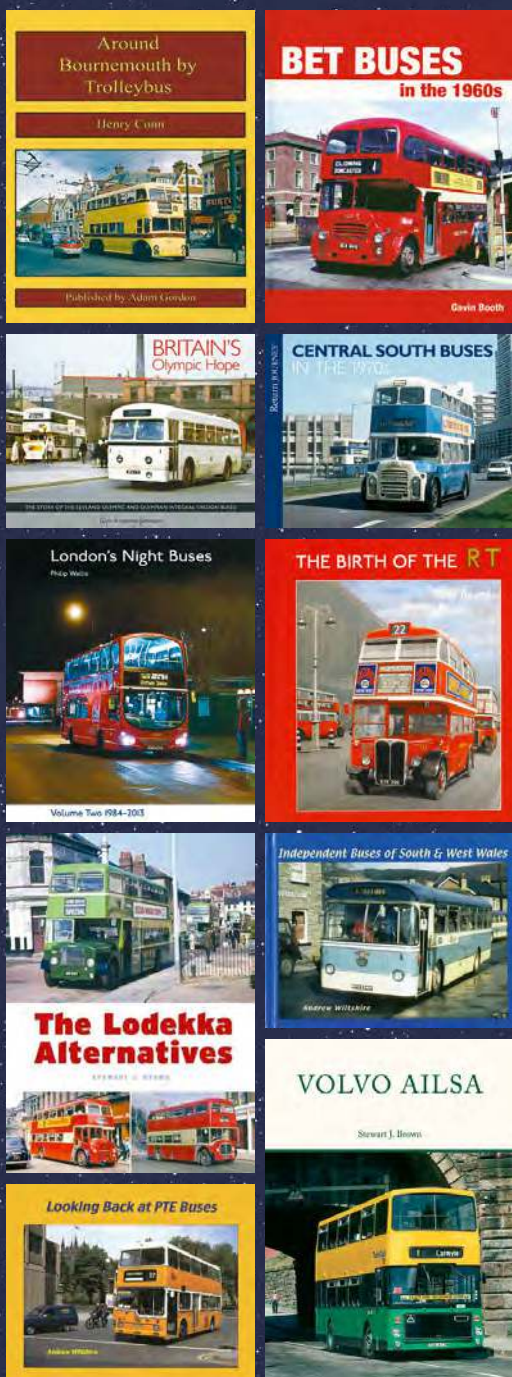


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A TIGER AND A REGENT

SIMON GILL provides an update on the major restorations of former Sheffield Leyland Tiger JWE 416 and AEC Regent III OWE 116 at the South Yorkshire Transport Museum.



We make no apology for including this super official Sheffield Transport Department photo once again. It shows No 216 when new at the gates of Norfolk Park, Sheffield, in January 1947. SOUTH YORKSHIRE TRANSPORT MUSEUM COLLECTION

We reported in April 2017's *B&CP* that Sheffield 216 (JWE 416), a Weymann-bodied Leyland Tiger PS1, had finally entered the South Yorkshire Transport Museum's workshop for a well-deserved restoration. A recent visit provided an update on its progress and enabled a look at Sheffield 116 (OWE 116), a Roe-bodied AEC Regent III, which has been off the road for over twenty years.

SHEFFIELD 216

Sheffield took delivery of 24 Leyland Tiger PS1s with Weymann 34-seat rear-entrance bodies during 1947/48. No 216 (JWE 416) was one of the first pair new in January 1947; the first buses built to post-war standard for the operator. As part of Sheffield's 'A' fleet, which was owned by the Corporation, it was allocated to Townhead Street garage and was used on its dedicated single-deck duties including the 31 to Lower Walkley and East End workman's services.

No 216 was withdrawn in January 1958 after just 11 years' service and converted into a mobile canteen numbered M62 – the 'M' standing for miscellaneous. It was known as the 'tea bus' to bus crews at the various Sheffield city centre bus termini where it was used.

Conversion involved stripping out the entire interior except for the rear bench seat. An angle iron frame was constructed behind the front bulkhead upon which was mounted a steel water tank with a hole in the roof for a filler pipe or vent, complete with curved top to match the ceiling.

A cabinet for sandwiches and cakes was built in front of this together with a serving counter which included space for the now old-fashioned water geyser. Double seats from 8ft wide buses, rather than the original seats, were positioned with their backs to the bus sides.

Renumbered MC62 as a 'mobile canteen' in the 1960s, JWE 416 was

withdrawn in 1967 and the following year became the first Sheffield bus to enter preservation; the Transport Department selling it to a group of enthusiasts for £15 (approximately £230 now). No 216 attended its first rally at Hull in August 1970 after initial restoration work painted all-over cream.

RESTORATION

No 216 then spent many years idle at Tinsley and Aldwarke, but on 23 November 2015 it was moved into the Museum's main workshop for work to begin. Hwfa Griffiths is leading the project – the ideal person having served his apprenticeship at Sheffield Transport Department's Central Works.

Work began by sorting the assorted spare parts stored inside the Tiger which were relocated to storage racks, followed by removing the remaining floor boards. The engine was started briefly to confirm it ran. Excess grease and oil were cleaned



No 216 awaiting its turn for restoration on 9 September 2007. SIMON GILL



No 216 sits in the main workshop after its November 2015 move with its saloon still filled with assorted parts. ANDREW NOLAN



Above left: By August 2016 most of the panels on the sides and the roof had been removed with work progressing on the cove panels and nearside luggage rack. ANDREW NOLAN

Above right: Radiator and engine removed and work progressing on the nearside during April 2017. ANDREW NOLAN

Below left: Electrical control panel and new wiring fitted in 216's cab. SIMON GILL



Below centre: No 216's interior is coming on well with new ceiling, floor, side panels and luggage racks refitted by September 2018. SIMON GILL

Below right: The refurbished Leyland E181 engine has been refitted into the newly painted engine compartment. The wooden support is holding up the front canopy while strengthening work is undertaken. SIMON GILL



Right: **Anyone for a cuppa? A reminder of 216's duties as the tea bus on 25 March 1963.** SIMON GILL

Below: **Sheffield's first nine Roe-bodied AEC Regent IIIs were regular performers on the 45 service to Totley. No 116 is seen in Pond Street bus station sporting the short-lived experimental half-drop ventilator in the rear lower-deck window.**

PAUL HARDWICK COLLECTION

off before the engine and gearbox were removed for steam cleaning and repainting.

The clutch was disconnected for overhaul, together with the radiator, fuel tank and saloon heater unit, which were removed and sent away for repair. The radiator was returned in three parts, so it was reassembled and the outer frame repaired.

The front and rear brakes were stripped and the shoes sent away for relining. Both hubs have been cleaned, bearings checked, and new oil seals fitted – a new outer bearing was obtained for the nearside rear hub. The kingpins were checked and found to be okay, as were the drag links, track rod ends and steering box, all of which were greased as necessary.

The rear road springs were removed and sent to Owens Springs for repair; the nearside spring was used as a pattern for the offside. The chassis has been painted, apart from a section at the rear where attention is needed and wooden cross members require renewal.

Turning to the bodywork, the entire wooden frame has been treated and

MOBILE CATERING DRIVERS DUTIES & POINT TIMES.			
<u>No.1 Duty.</u>		<u>RELIEF.</u>	
DAY OFF		On duty 5.30 a.m.	
		COMMERCIAL STREET	6.30 to 7.15
		PINFOLD STREET	7.30 to 8.30
		POND STREET	8.35 to 10.15
		RELIEF - Clean Mobile Off Duty	1.30
<u>No.2 Duty</u>		<u>On Duty 1.0 p.m.</u>	
On Duty 6.0 a.m.			
PITFOLD SQUARE	6.55 to 7.40	POND STREET	2.30 to 5.15
BRIDGE STREET	7.45 to 8.30	PINFOLD STREET	6.30 to 7.30
PITFOLD SQUARE	8.35 to 10.30	BRIDGE STREET	7.35 to 9.0
BRIDGE STREET	2.30 to 3.30		
PINFOLD STREET	3.35 to 4.30		
Off Duty 5.0 p.m.		Off Duty 9.30 p.m.	
<u>No.3 Duty</u>		<u>On Duty 5.0 a.m.</u>	
		POND STREET	6.0 to 6.45
DAY OFF		PITFOLD SQUARE	6.50 to 7.30
		Return to Club for Refill	
		WIDELAND TERRINGS	8.0 to 9.0
		PINFOLD STREET	9.20 to 10.15
		RELIEF - Clean Mobile Off Duty	1.30
<u>No.4 Duty</u>		<u>On duty 1.0 p.m.</u>	
On duty 12.0 noon			
POND STREET	2.30 to 5.15	BRIDGE STREET	2.30 to 5.15
PINFOLD STREET	6.30 to 7.5	PINFOLD STREET	3.25 to 4.15
POND STREET	7.10 to 7.55	WIDELAND TERRINGS	4.30 to 5.0
BRIDGE STREET	8.0 to 8.55	POND STREET	6.30 to 9.0
Off Duty 9.30 p.m.		Off Duty 9.30 p.m.	
25th March 1963.			

painted. The entrance and emergency door frames are intact but a new driver's cab door is being constructed. The window frames were repaired, painted and fitted temporarily into the frame and the luggage rack brackets located and restored. The main electrical control panel has been overhauled and refitted. Rewiring has been started and that to the rear lights protected with plastic tubing.

FUNDING

A supporting group, 'Friends of 216', was formed and around twenty Museum members provide regular financial support towards the restoration's cost. The Museum has also been successful in obtaining grant funding towards

the project with £1,500 awarded by the Transport Trust in 2017 followed by £10,000 from the Association for Industrial Archaeology in 2018. The South Yorkshire Transport Museum is extremely grateful for these generous grants and the contributions from its members and volunteers.

NINE REGENTS

Sheffield acquired 100 AEC Regent IIIs with pre-selector gearboxes between 1947 and 1950, but experience of Leyland's synchromesh gearbox in its Leyland PD2s led to a preference for the latter transmission. Fearing it would lose out on further orders following Sheffield's then recently-announced tram replacement programme, AEC agreed to fit synchromesh gearboxes in nine Regent IIIs for delivery in 1952.

However, the new gearbox was not ready in time so the buses, Nos 18/19/113-119 (OWE 18/19/113-119), were delivered with sliding-mesh gearboxes as type 9613A, the 'A' signifying a crash gearbox. All were later modified when the new synchromesh unit became available.

The nine buses were fitted with Roe bodies to its 'Pullman' four-bay deep-window design whereas nine PD2s delivered earlier in 1952 – the first Roe bodies for Sheffield – were of five-bay construction. Standard Roe features included teak frames, waist-rail mouldings and patent safety staircases.

To accommodate Sheffield's destination layout in the relatively shallow between-deck panels, the front number blinds were positioned on the nearside. Internally, they had 58 seats; 33 red leather upstairs and 25 green leather and moquette in the lower saloon. Side panels were matching red or green leather cloth. Painted cream with azure blue bonnet and window surrounds, the AECs were exceptionally fine-looking buses and cost £3,780 each.

All nine were allocated to the 'B' fleet, jointly owned by Sheffield Corporation and British Railways. No 119 was exhibited at the 1952 Commercial Motor Show and was fitted with an additional small window on the nearside lower-deck adjacent to the platform, paid for by Roe which felt it improved the design. Initial allocations were 18 and 19 to Leadmill Road and 113-119 at Bramall Lane. Nos 18/19/113-117 were transferred to East Bank when it opened in May 1961, by





Above: No 116 is seen in the Museum's workshop on 9 September 2007 with its front dome removed.

Right: The offside rear of 116 showing the completed upper-deck and distinctive Roe safety staircase window.

Far right: The nearside of 116 is largely complete except for fitting the upper-deck front window. All: SIMON GILL



Above: After being turned around, work on 116's offside is progressing well. The upper-deck is complete, and the lower-deck is now receiving attention. New timber has been fitted below the cab and the windows removed in readiness for painting. SIMON GILL



which time 118 and 119 were at the then recently-opened Greenland Road.

By the end of 1953, all had been re-equipped with synchromesh gearboxes fitted at the Transport Department's Queens Road works. A notice in the cab 'Synchromesh gearbox fitted do not double declutch' reminded drivers of the modification.

Unfortunately, teething troubles quickly appeared which included jumping out of gear and premature unit failure. Sheffield's engineers were instrumental in tracing part of the fault to the clutch and, after adjustment to the pressure plate and withdrawal mechanism, the difficulties were largely overcome. The buses settled down to an uneventful career in the city after modification.

The nine buses had 2000 added to their fleet numbers in September 1963 as part of a partial fleet renumbering to separate the 'A', 'B' and 'C' fleets, becoming 2018 etc.

SHEFFIELD 116

No 116 (OWE 116) was the third of the batch to be delivered on 15 September 1952, entering service on 25 September 1952. At first repaint its roof was painted grey in line with Sheffield's usual practice. An experimental unusual half-drop window was fitted in 116's offside rear lower-deck, which was later removed. In line with the rest of the batch, the semaphore arm indicators were replaced with flashing units in the late-1950s.

Withdrawal would normally have been expected during 1967/68, but in December 1964 a decision was made to reduce the size of the 'B' and 'C' (British Railways-owned) fleets. The nine Regents were the oldest double-deckers and their withdrawal would avoid the cost of recertification and repaint, so they were removed from the fleet strength on 31 March 1965.

All nine were sold for a lump sum of £1,752 to dealer W. North & Sons Ltd of

Sherburn in Elmet. No 116 was collected on 24 May 1965 and subsequently passed to Alfred Boakes, trading as Camden Coaches, of Sevenoaks, Kent.

PRESERVATION

Interest in acquiring OWE 116 for preservation began in November 1970 when Mr Boakes replied to an enquiry from the Sheffield Omnibus Enthusiasts Society's secretary asking if it was available. It had recently gained a 3½ year certificate of fitness and if it was to be sold a replacement bus would need to be found.

Following a visit to inspect 116 on 24 July 1971 a separate body, known as the 'Sheffield Regent Group', was formed to raise funds to acquire it. Mr Boakes expressed a preference for another AEC Regent/Roe double-decker.

Sheffield was withdrawing some AEC Regent Vs six months later, some of which had Roe bodywork. One of these,



1330 (6330 WJ), was serviceable and after withdrawal on 27 January 1972 was offered for sale by tender on 20 February 1972. Happily, a £240 tender submitted by the group was accepted on 6 March and 1330 was collected on 18 March, passing its MOT two days later.

After attending a few rallies and the last day of Bradford trolleybuses, 1330 was driven to Sevenoaks on 8 April 1972 and exchanged for 116, which arrived back in Sheffield the following day. No 116 passed a MOT on 17 April 1972 after minor electrical work and over the next few years attended many rallies as far afield as Weymouth and Glamis Castle, Scotland.

Restoration was carried out at times during the 1970s, 1980s and early-1990s before a less demanding schedule saw 116 regularly attend the AEC Rally, Trans-Lancs and Heart of the Pennines events.



No 1330 was later offered to the Group and arrived in February 1978; it currently awaits its turn in the restoration queue.

LATEST RESTORATION

A thorough exterior and interior restoration of 116 has been carried out over the past twenty years and what follows is an outline of some of the completed work. This has included removal and repair of the front roof dome, replacement of rotten framework, pillars, repainting and new glazing.

Pre-1959 built vehicles only required safety glass in forward facing windows; hence all the side glazing in 116 was standard plate glass. The intention is for the Regent to join the Museum's Class 6 heritage hire fleet, so it is being fitted with toughened glass in all passenger compartment windows. New window rubber to the correct profile is being used

Far left: **Work is progressing on 116's cab area. Note the registration plate is back in its original position below the radiator.**

Left: **The bus swapped for 116 in April 1972 was Sheffield 1330 (6330 WJ), a Roe-bodied AEC Regent V. Acquired for preservation in February 1978, it patiently awaits its turn for restoration.**

Below: **Sheffield 116 was a regular attendee at rallies until 20 years ago; it is seen here during the Heart of the Pennines event on 3 May 1992.** All: SIMON GILL

to refit the glass; the opportunity also being taken to repair broken window ventilators and renew the felt that allows the sliders to run smoothly in the frame.

Following restoration of the rear wheelarches the lower-deck interior side panels were covered with green leather cloth. New wooden flooring has been installed, floor material cut to size and glued into place. New trap doors were manufactured and fitted with new locks and fasteners.

Four battery boxes were repaired, repainted and fitted with new piano hinges. Four are no longer required but it adds to 116's originality to keep them all. The lower-deck bulkhead panels were removed to repair the rubber covering and refitted. Seat frames have been repainted and stanchions refitted.

With the nearside almost completed, OWE 116 saw daylight for the first time in eleven years since moving from Tinsley tram sheds when, on 8 November 2017, it was driven outside and turned so work could resume on the offside. The only work left to do on the nearside is to refit the fuel tank which, when found to be porous, was sent away for repair.

The upper-deck nearside front window also requires new glass; the pattern for which will be taken from the equivalent offside window. The windscreen frame has been removed for re-chroming.

Hopefully, it will not be too long before 116 is back on the road; we will bring you news of when that happens and further updates about 216. Watch this space!

Our thanks to Hwfa Griffiths and Andrew Nolan for their help with 216 and to David Roberts and Paul Hardwick for providing news about 116. The SYTM's newsletter, 'The Oily Rag', has also been invaluable. SYTM are on the lookout for suitable moquette for Leyland Tiger 216 – please contact Hwfa Griffiths at the museum if you can help.



SHEFFIELD REGENTS



For 40 years, four Joint Omnibus Committees, jointly owned by the corporations of Sheffield, Huddersfield,

Halifax and Todmorden and the railways were a unique feature of UK bus operation.

In Sheffield, the fleet was

divided into three, all of which wore the same livery and carried Sheffield Transport fleetnames. The 'A' fleet

comprised vehicles solely owned by the corporation, whilst the 'B' fleet was jointly owned by the corporation and the railways, the 'C' fleet being solely owned by the railways.

Following the formation of the National Bus Company, the 'A' and 'B' fleet remained with the corporation, whilst the 'C' fleet was dispersed amongst local NBC operators.

Here then is a round-up of some AEC Regents from the 'A' and 'B' fleets caught on film mostly in the 1970s. Colour slides of the 'C' fleet in the 1960s being a little more difficult to come by...



Top left: **Looks like a Sunday as a line of 1960 30ft 69-seat Weymann-bodied AEC Regent Vs are seen at rest in the garage. All members of the 'A' city fleet, they are from the left: A441/3, A435/6 (7441/3, 7435/6 WJ).**

PRESBUS ARCHIVE

Top right: **From the 'B' Joint Omnibus Committee fleet, 1955 tin-fronted AEC Regent III 1251 (UWE 751) with Roe 58-seat body awaits departure from the central bus station.** PRESBUS ARCHIVE

Above and left: **Two views of 'B' JOC No 1273 (VWE 73), another 1955 Roe-bodied AEC Regent III is seen both on Hathersage Road in May 1965 and at a later date bound for Walkley.** OMNICOLOUR/ PRESBUS ARCHIVE



Top left: **Weymann 58-seat-bodied AEC Regent V 802 (XWJ 802)** new to the 'A' fleet in 1957, heads out to Herdings on a route 30 journey. PRESBUS ARCHIVE

Above: **'A'-fleet Alexander-bodied 879 (7879 WJ)** was one of 20 such AEC Regent Vs delivered in 1960. PRESBUS ARCHIVE

Top right: **A 'B' fleet vehicle, Roe-bodied AEC Regent V No 1331 (6331 WJ)** is seen on a special working in May 1976. PRESBUS ARCHIVE

Right: **Seen in Sheffield city centre in September 1976, Weymann-bodied AEC Regent V No 751 (7451 WJ)** approaches tailoring chain 'John Collier'. We were bombarded by advertising at the time informing us: 'John Collier, John Collier — the window to watch' — hands up though those who are looking at the bus instead! PRESBUS ARCHIVE







55 Years on (and working under) BUSES

During a 55-year career in the bus industry, David Powell has been everything from a Ribble apprentice to part-owner of Maidstone & District. NICK LARKIN meets him!

'Diverse' is a good way to describe David Powell's 55 years – and counting – in the bus industry. 'Unique' is even better.

David began as an apprentice at Ribble Motor Services and eventually became one of the management buyout team at Maidstone & District Motor Services. He later became chairman of East Lancashire Coachbuilders.

THE EARLY YEARS

Born in Todmorden, then in the West Riding, in 1949 you could say he was born into buses. His dad, Thomas, had started with Todmorden Joint Omnibus Committee in 1936, and was a driver for

many years before becoming a supervisor in the garage. David's uncle, also named David, was a conductor, often on a bus driven by his brother, later becoming a driver himself and later inspector with the undertaking, which was jointly owned by Todmorden Corporation and the London, Midland & Scottish Railway (LMS) from its 1931 formation until 1947.

Railway nationalisation saw the LMS share pass to British Railways then subsequently the National Bus Company (NBC) in 1969. Todmorden JOC became part of the newly-formed Calderdale Joint Omnibus Committee in 1971 which was, in turn, absorbed into the West Yorkshire PTE three years later – the NBC share was sold to the PTE at this time.

'I used to go on the bus with my dad as a schoolboy, and loved it,' says David. 'The conductors were always friendly. Todmorden seemed like a family business.'



Above and left: **David Powell with his all-Leyland PD2 at the former Todmorden Joint Omnibus Committee Millwood. Garage. The building has recently been demolished. David's late dad, Thomas, is standing in the very same spot.**

Both: DAVID POWELL COLLECTION

I remember my dad always wore a white shirt and white tie. Todmorden buses ventured as far as the exotic (for a young lad) climes of Burnley and Rochdale.'

TO RIBBLE

The young David became a regular visitor to Ribble's Burnley Garage: 'I always wanted to be an engineer and got to know one of the fitters, Charlie Brownwood, who recommended my starting as an apprentice fitter,' he reveals.

'I started work at Burnley in July 1964 when I had just turned 15. I still have my wage slip for £2 7s 6d. There was a shortage of staff, so by the time I was 18 I was doing a full-time fitter's job.

'Ribble had Leyland PDs, Leopards and Royal Tigers at Burnley,' David recalls. 'And then there were Atlanteans, which I did like. They had their problems, but they were revolutionary.'

The Burnley allocation included eight 'Gay Hostess' Leyland Atlanteans used on Lancashire to London services and equipped with 50 reclining seats, toilets and a servery. Of the 37 Gay Hostesses built, 22 went to Standerwick – a Ribble subsidiary – and the remainder to Ribble itself.

David passed his PSV test at 21 and was able to drive for Standerwick:

'Standerwick had different terms and conditions to Ribble with seasonal part-time staff and some vehicles laid up over the winter,' he explains. 'In summer, the Gay Hostesses could do 3,000 miles a week.'

Ribble also had 20 'White Lady' Atlantean coaches used on interurban services throughout the company's operating area including the Manchester to Blackpool route: 'We had four of these at Burnley and they would do over 100,000 miles a year,' states David. 'The first ones left the depot at five thirty in the

Right: **A very young, yet still bus aware, David with his dad Thomas in Todmorden uniform.**
DAVID POWELL COLLECTION

Far right: **David's 1964 pass to get him to work at Preston.**
DAVID POWELL

morning and the last came in at ten past one the following morning.'

David then spent a year at Preston central works for which he had to leave Todmorden at 5.30am to arrive at Preston by 8.00am. He then returned to Burnley, where his duties included looking after vehicle records and the stores.

NBC CONTROL

Ribble was taken under National Bus Company control from January 1969 and the following year saw David appointed 'dock' foreman – also known as assistant engineer – by Ribble at Blackburn with an allocation of 55 buses at George Street and 15 coaches at Foundry Hill.

He had also undertaken evening engineering studies at college between the ages of 15 and 23 and achieved a City and Guilds certificate and qualified for the Institute of Road Transport Engineers.

David married Linda in 1972 and the couple moved to Blackburn before David's next move to Bolton as depot engineer for two years looking after a fleet of 45 buses including Leyland Atlanteans and Leopards.

His next role was depot engineer at Ribble's former North Western Road Car Company Manchester depot in Hulme Hall Road, with a rather different fleet



– 125 coaches: 'There were 95 National Travel North West vehicles and 30 Ribble coaches, all of which were Leyland Leopards apart from seven Bristol REs,' he recalls.

'Duties included regular Manchester to London and Glasgow services, London to Stranraer and the Tyne-Tees-Mersey route,' he continues. 'We had a pool of coaches in London and received a daily telex from staff saying what was where.'

'It was hard work but a great challenge. Every coach going to London was given a 20 minute safety inspection over the pits, which certainly helped reduce breakdowns. And stricken coaches from other NBC companies would be rescued from the motorway and repaired.'

Below left: **David took this photo of a Ribble 'White Lady' Atlantean at Preston in 1963. These buses covered around 100,000 miles a year!** DAVID POWELL

Below: **David, who was smoking a pipe at the time, with a Standerwick Plaxton-bodied Leopard on a 1971 works outing to Blackpool for the Lambert House Slipper Shop.** DAVID POWELL COLLECTION





A MANAGEMENT BUYOUT

In 1986 David was one of five M&D managers who bought the company from NBC: 'NBC was keen to sell M&D, the management team worked well together, and we were mostly the right age to take on the risk,' he reveals. 'We put together a business plan, borrowed some money, and put our houses on the line.'

But bidding successfully for the company was not a foregone conclusion: 'A French would-be buyer came onto the scene and asked if we would work for him if he bought M&D,' remembers David. 'We said "no".'

M&D was among the first subsidiaries to be sold and the buyout did not result in sudden and drastic changes: 'Obviously we didn't have to get NBC approval for any decisions and could act quickly, but it was still the same management team. Terms and conditions, including the pension scheme, were also the same.'

'All staff were given £200 of preference shares but few took the chance to buy more. Generally, they supported us though.'

Buses remained in NBC green but with cream applied in place of white. Major landmarks in the independent M&D era included several 'bus wars,' particularly with Bygone Buses and municipally-owned Boro'line in Maidstone, which in NBC days had run a co-ordinated network of services.

Boro'line became overstretched with 40 vehicles in Maidstone and 80 in London. The London operation was sold to Kentish Bus on 17 February 1992 and Boro'line was placed into administration two days later before ceasing operations in May.

'We bought the assets, including the Armstrong Road depot,' says David. 'We didn't operate any of the vehicles, but it was a sad end.'

BRITISH BUS, COWIE & ARRIVA

M&D's directors voted to sell the company as some circumstances had changed and others had had enough. M&D passed to British Bus in 1995 and David became Group Engineering Director with an office in Sittingbourne, Kent.

British Bus had 5000 vehicles operating for subsidiaries including Midland Red North, Midland Fox, London & Country, Yorkshire Bus Group, Clydeside and Liverpool-based North Western. It was

FACING SOUTH

'1979 was time for a change,' considers David, and the Powell family moved to Kent where David became Area Engineer for Maidstone & District's (M&D's) North West Kent area with 350 vehicles under his control.

'It was a different culture at M&D,' he admits. 'Ribble was considered textbook within the industry and it was a very good company, although very formal. That is not necessarily a bad thing in many ways though it can stifle initiative. M&D was less centralised.'

David's remit also included East Kent's Canterbury and Herne Bay depots as NBC tied M&D and East Kent together until their 1983 separation, when David became fleet engineer at M&D.

'When I moved to M&D it had bought a lot of small capacity single-deckers, which turned out to be the wrong choice,' he explains. 'Larger capacity buses were needed when services were cut back so I had to put some early Atlanteans back on the road. Some had very long service lives.'

FLEET DIVERSITY

David was dealing with a diverse fleet, including vehicles from NBC's bus trials of 1976, which had settled at Chatham: 'There were Volvo Ailsas, which I thought were the best of the bunch, Metro-Scania Metropolitans, which the drivers liked but suffered from gearbox problems, and Leyland and Gardner-engined Bristol VRTs.'

A further trial in 1980 featured seven Dennis Dominators, which David considered okay and MCW Metrobuses. It was also intended to include Leyland Titans, which failed to materialise owing to manufacturing problems, so Bristol VRTs were used again.

'I think the Gardner-engined VRT won the tests because M&D had a lot of operational experience of these vehicles, but it was an interesting experiment,' David considers.

Further Dominators were bought from Merseyside along with former East Staffs District Council examples sold by Stevensons.

Above: **Ribble's Burnley depot, where David worked, with a 1966 Leyland Leopard in Standerwick guise. At the wheel is fitter Charlie Brownwood, who recommended David for an apprenticeship.**

Left: **David (with tie) accompanied by cleaning staff at Ribble's George Street, Blackburn, depot.**
Both: DAVID POWELL COLLECTION



soon sold to Cowie, which rebranded itself as Arriva in 1997.

'British Bus had left me to get on with the job,' recalls David. 'Its subsidiaries had quite a bit of autonomy, but now, under a PLC, things were different. The part of the job I loved, being close to the ground, had gone.'

GWU 12

David (sort of) took retirement in 1998 and had the opportunity to concentrate on a particularly interesting project, his 1948 former Todmorden all-Leyland PD2, GWU 12.

This vehicle was donated to the Todmorden Antiquarian Society on the JOC's demise and rallied for many years.

Dennis O'Neill, who looked after the bus, asked David if there was space available at any of British Bus's depots for it. 'I couldn't give the go-ahead without asking but it seemed there was a place for it at Heckmondwike, but in the meantime he gave me the paperwork for the bus, which I'd known for a long time.'

The PD2 was treated to bodywork refurbishment and a rebuilt engine, David doing some of this along with Preston St Coachworks in Faversham, Kent; the finished bus was repainted by former M&D paint shop foreman Steve Childs.

The interior of the bus remains largely original although Hants and Dorset Trim restored the seats with moquette to original specification from Holdsworth and Connolly leather.

A highlight of David's ownership of GWU 12 was a Todmorden reunion in 2000. Former general manager Teddy Metcalf, who joined the undertaking in 1924 and retired on its 1971 demise, was among the guests: 'Teddy gave a very nice talk over coffee after the end of a tour of Todmorden routes,' says David. 'And he was well into his nineties at the time.'

EAST LANCS COACHBUILDERS

Meanwhile, in 2003 David received an unusual phone call: 'Would you like to be chairman of East Lancs Coachbuilders?' he was asked.

The company had been associated with British Bus, and David joined the organisation at not the greatest time in its history: 'East Lancs used to build about 230 buses a year, including 30 single-deckers, which there was no profit in,' considers David. 'We had some good

orders from operators including Reading and Nottingham but with the changes from Euro4 to Euro5 engines we didn't have any chassis and the difficult decision was taken to put the company into administration in 2007.'

East Lancs passed to an investment company controlled by the Darwen Group, which would also buy Optare.

David has since done everything from running apprentice schemes at Canterbury College to part-time driving for Chalkwell. He also carries out a wide range of consultancy work on various issues and his son, Thomas, is an engineering manager for Stagecoach in London.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

What have been the highlights of David's career? 'I enjoyed working for coaches at Ribble in Manchester, although the job was tough. Also, being a co-owner of M&D.'

And a favourite vehicle? 'I don't think anyone doubts the Leyland Olympian was an excellent vehicle, particularly with a Cummins engine and ZF gearbox, I've always been a fan of Leyland Leopards,' adds David, who is still a member of the Northern Region Engineering Committee.

So what are the biggest industry changes? 'People are more closely monitored and under pressure nowadays – PLCs have certainly changed things.

'Having said that, the industry has not changed from being something that a lot of capital and hardware is tied up in, and it is still labour intensive. The industry is also facing the same problems it has for many years, and it's still fascinating!'



Top: **David with former Todmorden JOC general manager Ted Metcalf, who was in his 90s at the time, at a staff reunion in 2000.** DAVID POWELL

Above: **Leyland PD2 interior restored to original specification.** DAVID POWELL COLLECTION

Below: **David considers the Leyland Olympian as the best of all the buses he has worked with. He recommended purchase of Northern Counties-bodied examples like this when he worked at Maidstone & District.** DAVID POWELL



inconsistent look throughout the different destinations. For example, 'Thorpe Arch Trading Estate' would need to be a smaller text size than 'Leeds' to fit the same display aperture. Different operators chose dissimilar fonts over the years; London Transport, for example, using Johnston.

DISPLAY

The look and layout of the destination box was an engineering function dependent upon whoever was in charge of each operator at the time. Operators created a design and the bodybuilders made it to that specification.

The National Bus Company's buses had the same layout, but municipal and independent operators had their own looks. Bradford City Transport buses in the late-1960s adopted the St Helens layout as the then Bradford manager had previously worked at St Helens and wanted more of the same.

I ought to mention how operators with joint services tended to use the same or similar destination display style. Devon General had some batches of AEC Regent Vs with Tilling-style displays for its joint services with Western National, which included the Torquay to Plymouth express route.

Many independent operators with a varied fleet of new and second-hand buses often panelled over any destination boxes that were not required leading to further variations.

There will also be fluorescent tubes or tungsten bulbs – depending on the vehicle's age – to illuminate the blind box to enable intending passengers to read the display during the hours of darkness.

OPERATION

Operating/winding the blind from a half-cab vehicle was either carried out from the cab by the driver or by an often precariously-balanced conductor standing on an outside step to reach a winding handle. The latter method was overcome by some operators with the fitting of extended winding handles.

Some operators required the driver to wind the destination blind from the cab and the conductor to wind the numbers from outside. The conductor still had to



TALKIN' 'BOUT MY DESTINATION

'Who said that?' we ask as ASHLEY BLACKMAN looks at destination blinds in the latest instalment of his restoration series.

Destination blinds are not often written about in any great depth. Believe it or not, they have a huge following among bus and coach enthusiasts as I found out when restoring Simon Wiles' West Yorkshire Bristol VRT No 1746.

Simon certainly knows his stuff about destination blinds and was very particular about getting the correct blinds for his Bristol. He had a variety of new blinds made by McKenna Brothers of Manchester, including one in upper case and another using lower case to portray the different styles 1746 carried throughout its service life.

Simon and I discussed destination blinds and what to consider when restoring your vehicle.

THE JOURNEY BEGINS

Blinds were printed on linen from way back when and we can only assume this was because it was a commonly available durable material. They were later made in Tyvek, a synthetic material not as hard wearing as linen, but best described as reinforced paper which was also used for packaging. Operators also used polyester as a cheaper alternative.

Tyvek and polyester are still available today, but it is much harder to find someone able to print destination blinds onto linen, if at all. It will be interesting to know if anyone is still capable of creating these.

Blinds made from the 1980s onwards tended to be in lower case and font Helvetica. This font was popular because it could be condensed and enlarged without changing the letter shapes; there are several fonts that look radically different when altered resulting in an



**National Bus Company
– 1980 West Yorkshire
Bristol VRT.**



**Northampton Daimler
CVG6 with 1970s
modified display.**



**Manchester standard –
1958 Leyland Titan
PD2.**



**East Kent 1969 Daimler
Fleetline.**



**Tilling Group 'T' display
– Southern Vectis
Bristol Lodekka.**

watch and instruct the driver to ensure the correct destination was displayed. The introduction of one-man-operated (OMO) buses led to the use of mirrors in assisting destination selection from the driver's cab.

Destination blinds were seldom changed mid-route, but some of Southdown Motor Services' longer 1950s routes had more intermediate points than could be shown at once and required changes throughout a journey.

MANUFACTURE & COLOUR

Blinds were often made by specialist manufacturers, such as McKenna Brothers of Manchester and Norbury Brothers of Altrincham, with numerous blinds produced over the years for so



Devon General single-deck 1964.



East Yorkshire Albion Aberdonian 1957.



Warrington Corporation 1946 Leyland Titan PD1. DAVID JUKES



Bournemouth Corporation 1956 Tiger Cub. DAVID JUKES



Western National Royal Blue 1962 Bristol MW6G coach.



many different operators. Some operators, such as London Transport, and the cities of Birmingham and Manchester, produced their own blinds using in-house screen-printing equipment.

Some operators ensured their destination blinds stood out by using coloured displays. Examples include: Bournemouth Corporation, which had a rainbow of destination backgrounds; London Transport Green Line coaches, which used yellow backgrounds with black lettering; Devon General, which used yellow text for express services, while Southern Vectis and other Isle of Wight operators had colour-coded routes. The colourful displays helped to make the different destinations distinctive for the public.

There are a wide variety of fonts, colours, glass aperture sizes and operating methods with many stories to be told as to how such decisions were made.

ROLLING ALONG

Destination blinds are certainly an important piece of your bus or coach restoration. If you are lucky enough to have original blinds in good condition, brilliant, you will probably not need to read much further, unless you would like some reproductions made for future use.

If you have the original destination blinds for your vehicle, especially if you have an older vehicle which would have

This page: **Identical displays of this form were specified by the Tilling Group for its post-war single-deck Bristol L and double-deck Bristol K 1940s deliveries as demonstrated by this West Yorkshire L and Hants & Dorset K. An identical display was fitted above the K's open rear platform.**



Right: **A typical destination blind could be a considerable length as shown by these City of Oxford Motor Services examples.**

had linen blinds, do make sure to keep these stored safely and certainly use them in your newly restored vehicle. When buses were repainted, operators did not always fit lovely new blinds to go in it, so do keep this in mind. Blinds would be changed when a bus was allocated to a different garage.

REPRODUCTION

There are many things to consider when getting old-style blinds reproduced: the font, style of material and the number of destinations/routes to be displayed. Your budget will likely determine these.

With a larger budget you could get a full replica blind made including all routes and destinations. But, if you are on a limited budget and a full replica blind is not a priority, you could get a blind that has four or five destinations you remember; you may notice some preserved buses always display the same destination.

Make sure your numbers and destinations match; be aware of which route number went where and use the appropriate destination(s) with it (sorry if the images used in this article have not followed this rule...).

If, when having your blinds reproduced, you are unsure of what destinations should be on the blind or the correct font style, then you can make an appeal to enthusiast groups. There are websites where you can upload a high-resolution photograph and it will match and tell you the font; Simon used this method when recreating his West Yorkshire blinds for 1746. If your vehicle is pre-1977, the blinds were most likely made on linen – anything after is quite hard to distinguish between Tyvek and polyester by photographs alone.

BLIND MECHANISMS

If you find any of the destination box mechanisms missing, again make an online appeal as you never know what enthusiasts store in their attics and sheds. Blinds are sometimes pushed up to the glass using extra spacer bars but do bear in mind you cannot have the rollers right up to the glass as it would be scratched. They need to be set back and then have the bars put in to stretch the blind.

Look at your restoration project's blind gears as they can seize over time through



corrosion. Grease all the equipment as it could become quite stiff and you could break the mechanism if you are not careful. Keep the mechanism lubricated by running oil on the gears and let it soak in. It is very important to put the blinds on the rollers evenly and keep some tension or they will start to go to one side and fold over themselves.

IN CONCLUSION

McKenna Brothers is a leading company producing destination blinds for the public transport industry. Dean and his team will be able to help you recreate the perfect blind for your bus or coach if you send as much information as possible; all the required destinations together with the lengths and widths of your destination display and glass aperture.

They may even help you with a wall display, which leads me on to the next very important point.

It is a tragedy so many historic blinds are being chopped up and sold on eBay for hundreds of pounds just to be displayed in a frame on a wall. You can get a bespoke blind made by McKenna's with exactly what is required for a fraction of the price.

Other enthusiasts and I are currently buying up original linen blinds to save them from being chopped up and sold on. To those who do chop them up; please don't. These blinds are part of our heritage and we want to keep as many as possible restored for future generations to enjoy.

If you are interested in seeing the process of how destination blinds are made there are a few videos you can find on YouTube including one by British Pathé news about London Transport and another showing how McKenna Brothers make their blinds.

END OF THE ROAD

I enjoy the nostalgia of destination blinds, especially those from well-remembered holiday destinations and local areas. My favourite destination blinds include Devon General upper-case lettering, London Transport and East Kent – all of which I fondly remember from my childhood.

What are your favourites? Maybe you will remember some comical destinations. Here are some unusual destinations found on many different operators' buses, generally places or public houses:

Load of Mischief, Pony Dick, Windy Arbor, Plank Lane, Jumpers, Battle, Sandwich.

This month NIGEL APPLEFORD examines Oxford Diecast's 1:76 scale Plaxton Panorama coach.

Plaxton's Panorama coach body was developed in conjunction with Sheffield United Tours (SUT) as a new design with larger fixed rectangular panoramic side windows. It was based on the short-windowed Embassy but with alternate body pillars stopped at the waist-rail. Six 36-seat bodies, featuring front and rear styling from the existing Plaxton range, were built for SUT on AEC Reliance chassis in 1958; the operator designating them 'Panorama Pioneers'.

Production Panorama coaches (seating 41) were built for the 1959 and 1960 seasons with styling changes, including a more upright front, an inward-opening passenger door and a kinked waistline beneath the rearmost side windows.

1961 regulation changes allowed coaches to be built to 36 feet length and 8 feet 2½ inches width; both AEC and Leyland soon offered lengthened versions of their Reliance and Leopard chassis respectively.

The Panorama was redesigned with a new front end incorporating a deeper windscreen (one or two piece) and a smaller lower-mounted grille. It retained

the flat fixed panoramic side windows from the earlier model, albeit with a slightly curved waistline towards the rear. The body also featured forced air ventilation with roof lights and offside rear emergency exit.

These longer coaches typically sat 49 or 51 passengers and soon proved popular with operators of all sizes, especially those working express services. This is the variation produced in model form by Oxford Diecast.

A similar body was produced for the Bedford VAL, a lightweight chassis with twin-steer front axles, which used a large

Embassy-style oval grille owing to the VAL's front-mounted radiator. Production examples were generally badged 'Val'.

The Panorama was redesigned completely as the Panorama I in 1965 and was available on front-engined lightweight chassis, such as Ford's R226 and Bedford's VAM and VAL, as well as the heavier AEC and Leylands. A model of the Panorama I is included in the Oxford Diecast 2mm scale and Original Omnibus Company 4mm scale ranges.

THE MODELS

The model certainly looks like the real coach and dimensionally appears to be extremely accurate. Construction is as Oxford Diecast's normal practice for single-deck models; a die-cast lower portion with a clear plastic top half, masked and sprayed in the body colour to leave the windows completely flush. It works well but makes repainting more difficult.

The roof-mounted air scoops are separately fitted metal items, although the

Above: **Ribble Motor Services 752 (TRN 752)** was one of 35 similar coaches delivered to the Ribble group in 1963/64. This is a 36-foot-long Plaxton Panorama-bodied Leyland Leopard PSU3/3R. Courtesy PM PHOTOGRAPHY

Left: **Southdown car 1176 (176 DCD)** was one of five 49-seat Panoramas delivered to Southdown in 1964 on Leyland Leopard PSU3/3R chassis as its Nos 1175-1179 (175-179 DCD). They were later joined by similar 1180 (480 DUF) with a 35-seat Panorama body for a touring contract. The air vents on this model do not fit very well and several suffered from over-thinned paint on the lower part.



FLEETLIST

OXFORD DIECAST LIMITED 4mm 1:76 SCALE

Ref	Identity	Released
76PAN001	Southdown Motor Services 1176 (176 DCD)	Jan 2015
76PAN002	Flight's Tours Limited 977 JOB	Jul 2015
76PAN003	Cotter's Coach Tours of Glasgow AYS 401B	Apr 2016
76PAN004	Yorkshire Woollen 941 (KHD 904)	May 2016
76PAN005	Sheffield United Tours 337 (337 EWJ)	Apr 2017
76PAN006	Bere Regis & District UFX 567	Sep 2017
76PAN007	Ribble Motor Services 743 (TRN 743)	Aug 2018
76PAN008	A Timpson & Sons 552 GXX	Nov 2018
76PAN009	Ribble Motor Services (National Bus Company white livery)	Future release Q2 2019





Left: The second release was this model of an AEC Reliance, 977 JOB, in the livery of Birmingham-based Flight's Tours. This is the only release to date featuring aluminium wheel trims, and it also has the front grille with inset fog lights.

Below: This model wears Cotter's unusual but attractive livery. Some of the company's destinations are shown along the roof with intricate lettering on the boot and GB plates. The fleetname and number plate below the rear window form part of the top-half plastic moulding.



Right: Yorkshire Woollen's small coach fleet was transferred to Hebble Motor Services by the National Bus Company on 1 June 1970. Yorkshire Woollen 941 (KHD 904) was one of a pair of Panorama-bodied Leopard PSU3/3RTs delivered in 1964 and later transferred to Hebble.

Below right: Dorchester-based Bere Regis and District Motor Services was known for its mainly Bedford fleet but occasionally bought small numbers of heavyweight coaches, mainly AEC Reliances. This model of UFX 567, one of a pair of Reliances delivered in 1964, appears to be affected by a slipped paint mask above the windscreen and entrance door.



Bottom: Sheffield United Tours (SUT) was the instigator of the original Panorama body and continued to buy Panoramias, all on AEC Reliance chassis, for its tour fleet including 337 (337 EWJ) which was delivered in 1963. SUT employed additional brightwork on the sides of its coaches. Sister 336 (336 DWJ) was exhibited at the 1962 Commercial Motor Show with wood effect Aborite panelling, which was all the rage on contemporary cars.





quality of fitting is variable. The interior is a single colour plastic moulding but lacks a floor between the seats – which include armrests. It is very crisp and could be further detailed if required. A black steering wheel and gear lever complete the interior.

The upper window section has four tabs into which the seating clips. This in turn sits in the lower casting and is secured with two screws. The front bumper/grille and rear bumper/lighting can be removed by levering with a thin

blade (carefully as they do fly off!) which enables Oxford to fit different grille and lighting arrangements as per the prototype modelled.

The plastic wheels are very well detailed with rubber tyres on metal axles. A plastic sub-chassis holds the axles in place; this also features engine, tank and ancillary details in part relief.

Windscreen wipers are moulded on and picked out in paint, partly on the windscreens and lower casting, but the joint lines are almost invisible. No

external mirrors are provided.

Livery rendition and printing are of a reasonable standard with a couple of exceptions noted in the photograph captions. Packaging is a black plastic base with clear plastic top forming a box with a card outer wrapper. Models are secured to the base by two screws.

This is a fine model which appears to be popular with collectors and modellers; it is also reasonably priced with the latest releases having an RRP of £18.95. Hopefully more liveries will follow.

Top: Ribble Motor Services was a major customer for the Leyland Leopard chassis and Plaxton coachwork. Thirty-five 36-foot-long Leopards with Panorama bodies entered the Ribble, Standerwick and Scout fleets in 1963/64 for express and limited stop services, tours, excursions and private hire. Ribble also employed a three-track number blind below the normal blind box and mounted its fleetname on the front grille. This model has an unusually high steering wheel; on the real vehicles it was only just visible above the windscreen's base.

Left: The latest release to date is a model of Timpsons' 552 GXX, a 1963 AEC Reliance modelled on an excursion to the Kent coast.



Above: Oxford Diecast chose to model the 1961-style Panorama and Corgi Original Omnibus Company the 1964 Panorama I. The frontal differences can be seen although, by NBC white days, the polished aluminium trim below the windscreen, door and front side windows of this Panorama I has gone.

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Mystery National Bus Company subsidiaries, an extremely unusual private hire vehicle and searching for a bus song. Over to NICK LARKIN.

UNITED TREAT

We couldn't resist bringing you this fine tribute to United Automobile Services, which though sadly there are no details on the image, looks as if it might be a publicity shot. 'Are you absolutely sure you want to go to West Hartlepool?' the peaked

capped driver appears to be saying. The location is Stockton-on-Tees High Street.

BUT3 (SHN 718), an Eastern Coach Works-bodied Bristol LS6B, was new to United in June 1954 and was a regular on the London services until withdrawal in 1967. It was sold by W Norths

to Huddersfield contractor Drury and returned to Norths in 1970.

Behind is a Bristol MW on a local service; note the lovely ornate lamp post and selection of historic building across the road which were later demolished. I can remember waiting for coach connections

in Stockton at this very spot as a small child. Nearby was a Wimpy bar which had a sticker marked with the letters 'LV' in the window which for some reason fascinated me. Only years later did I discover it stood for 'Luncheon Vouchers.' The things you remember!



Picture: NICK LARKIN COLLECTION



Picture: NICK LARKIN

ROUTEMASTER WALLPAPER

It's not often that someone invites you into their office to admire the wallpaper, but John Huckle, major collector and enthusiast of Standard Motor Company cars and commercials, is not content with a few rolls of Vymura's embossed finest.

This magnificent wall display is certainly something different. The Routemaster covering comes from www.biggerluxus.de and costs £76.49 plus £9.45p&p.

To quote the publicity exactly: 'Generate a beautiful panorama ambience for your living room with the photo wallpaper mural. The London creates a very comfortable and modern atmosphere and convinces by its photorealistic design. The photo wallpaper mural is composed of four strips of wallpaper'.

Tap 'Routemaster wallpaper' into eBay and the details will come up. It is obviously a Heritage Route 15 Routemaster, but why does it have a strange registration number?

BUS STAMP

Time to feature another bus stamp, we think. Little is known about this Romanian offering but that certainly looks like an AEC badge on the front grille. Can anyone enlighten us?



WATER THOUGHT!

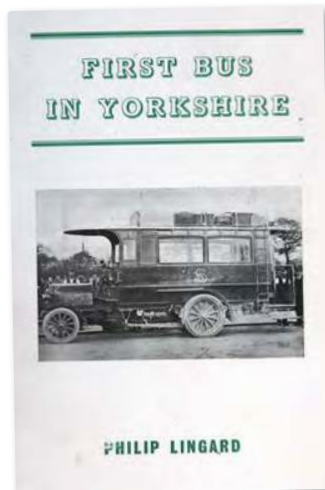


Here is a tramway connection, obscure even by Off Route standards. The label informs us the water source is Louise Spring F59710 Merignies, but the provider, ABC Limited, is based at The Old Tramway Depot, St Leonards on Sea.



FIRST CHOICE

Wow, we never knew they had been there that long! But not really as the First Bus mentioned here is the joyfully named Ezra Laycock of Cowling, not the large operator that might come to mind today. And the vehicle pictured here has definitely been withdrawn!



LEDGARD IRONY

This atmospheric image shows two contrasting Roe-bodied vehicles in their bodybuilder's home town of Leeds.

On the left is Leeds City Transport Daimler Fleetline No 140 (LUA 140F), new in October 1967, making a massive

contrast with 1950 U, an AEC Regent V new to legendary independent Samuel Ledgard in September 1957.

Sadly we are not viewing in colour but 1950 U, one of the few PSVs of the era to have a single letter in its registration and carrying its West Yorkshire

Road Car fleetnumber DAW6, also appears to carry West Yorkshire's Tilling red and cream livery following the acquisition of Ledgard (or, more accurately, Exors of Samuel Ledgard Ltd) on 15 October 1967 – the very same month the Fleetline took to the streets of Leeds!



Picture: NICK LARKIN COLLECTION



SONG SEARCH

A chance glance at the logbook made the Eastern Bus Enthusiasts (EBE) members owning former Viscount Bus and Coach Company Leyland Olympian F509 NJE realise it was registered 30 years ago to the day on 1 December 1988.

And so former employees of the one-time Peterborough-based Cambus Holdings subsidiary enjoyed a tour of old Viscount routes, taking in sites such as Queensgate Bus Station

and the 13ft 9ins bridge near the old Hotpoint factory.

Viscount was formed in 1989 and its buses received the smart yellow and white livery seen on this Olympian until its disappearance after the 1995 Stagecoach takeover of Cambus.

By now the last surviving complete Viscount Leyland Olympian, F509 NJE was bought in 2016 by two EBE members from Tiger European of Nottingham and returned to Viscount guise.

Everyone enjoyed the anniversary trip, but something was missing. Where was the Viscount song? 'It was played as a commercial on Hereward Radio for much of the 1990s, but we can't find a recording anywhere! It would be great to have played it during the trip,' says co-owner of the bus, Nathan Merryweather.

Above: **Viscount Olympian at Queensgate Bus Station, 30 years to the day it was first registered.** STEPHEN LONGMIRE

CHITTY & CO

Possibly the most unusual vehicle ever seen in a bus and coach company's fleet is here! Chitty Chitty Bang Bang has been on loan to Lodge's Coaches of High Easter, which is opening a new museum for its classic vehicle collection, called 'The Toybox' (watch out for the full story in next month's *B&CP*).

Chitty has been on loan to the museum but can be hired. The car was reconstructed by WG Grant using original components from the number 3 racing car, originally built by Alan Mann Racing of Hertfordshire, which was seen at the film's start competing in the 1908 German Grand Prix.



We understand Chitty is unlikely to make an appearance in service but imagine it would go down quite well on a school run!

While talking of rare vehicles, another and rather contrasting machine at High

Easter is a now rare Optare Excel in the form of 1999-built V936 VUB, which was new to Meteor Parking of Heathrow, which is kept to Lodge's extremely high standards and used on schools and occasional service work.



Pictures: NICK LARKIN

FESTIVE GREETINGS

Pre-Christmas shopping expeditions by Grace and David Jukes uncovered these Routemaster (we think)-themed Christmas treats. The London tree decorations are courtesy of Poundland for the sum of – you've guessed it – £1 and the Santa Bus countdown from Sainsbury's for slightly more. The care and use instructions for the latter advise: 'This festive bus is sure to appeal to children as they have fun moving the dials around to show the number of sleeps 'til the big day.' Any resemblance to members of the *B&CP* team is purely coincidental!



MYSTERY NBC SUBSIDIARIES

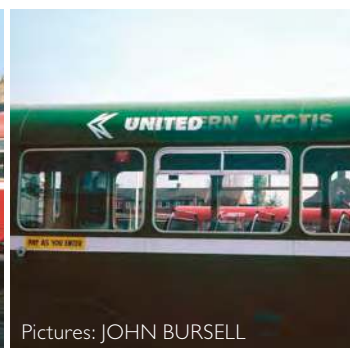
We always thought the National Bus Company's history as well-documented, but apparently two subsidiaries slipped under the radar. The NBC went through a period of local renaming but 'Southern United' and 'United Vectis' are new to us.

But the camera doesn't lie, and John Bursell sent two pictures via *B&CP*'s Simon Gill (thanks to you both!) he took at Ripon bus station in March 1979.

Yikes – that's 40 years ago! The photographs show one of the two 1969 vintage

Marshall-bodied Bristol LHS single-deckers acquired by United from Southern Vectis

in 1977 (NDL 768/769G) – although it's not certain which one!



Pictures: JOHN BURSELL

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Bristol/ECW or AEC Reliance single-deck bus or coach. Any model considered but must be in good condition. Please contact: 011 4230 4691, 07870 180276 or sutlink@btinternet.com.

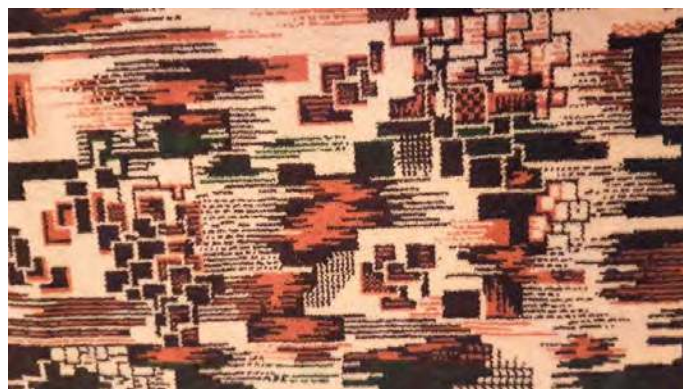
Metrorider or a Marshall Capital-bodied Dennis Dart. Anything considered. Contact: plymouthanddistrictcoaches@aol.com.

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Opportunity to join Bristol VRT preservation group in the Wessex area attending rallies in the south of England. Please contact John: 07776 137673

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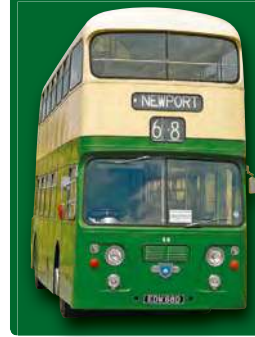


Do you need 1930s moquette? A group of preservationists are joining together to order moquette typically used by Maidstone & District and other operators in the 1930s based on Holdsworth's pattern BDCD 7871, sometimes called '1930s geometric'. We need to meet a minimum order requirement and those who join us at the time of ordering can take advantage of purchasing at cost price. For further details, please contact Paul Baker at: pr.baker@btconnect.com.

Leyland O.680 service manual and parts list, published 1961. Good, clean condition, but some marks where it has been used. £20 plus postage. Terry Britton: tandmbritton@outlook.com or tel: 07808 929889.

Bristol Lodekka pinion for back axle £80 Front panel for late reg West Midlands Metrobus. £30. Several large coach type wing mirrors £10.each. Two Leyland front wheel discs £30. each. Set off Approx 20 seats suitable for Leyland PDI. Think ex-Lytham St Anns. £200 the lot. Buyer collects all the above items or can be sent at a price. Ring LVVS Lincoln. 01522 500566, 01522 722705 or 01522 689497.

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Buses magazine. 539 issues from January 1973 to December 2017 (Nos 214 – 753). All in good condition. £50 or offers. Collection only from Ashted, Surrey. Contact: geoffthebus@yahoo.com.

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Modern Tramways & Light Railway Review 1962 to 1967, Buses Extra June 1986 to September 1992, Classic Bus October 1992 to July 2016, Preserved Bus Spring 1998 to April 2001, Bus & Coach Preservation May 1998 to December 2016, Buses January 1966 to December 2016. Contact Mrs Rolley: 01296 730446 or E-mail: wendyrolley53@btinternet.com

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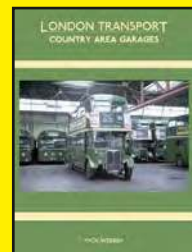
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PHOTOGRAPHS WANTED

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Pictures wanted of the following Bedford J2 Plaxton Embassy coaches EXS 569F: New to SMT Glasgow, Pattison, Paisley; then Wilkinson, Gateshead; Sowerby, Gilsland nr Carlisle; Tom Jackson, Blackpool Line, St Annes. PVV 888J: New to Country Lion, Northampton. 644 HAA: New to Cooke, Stoughton; then Safeguard, Guildford; Wilkinson, Kettlewell. Please telephone Steve on 07721 377720 (mobile) / 01424 756010 (landline) or send an e-mail to: dinel066@outlook.com

Colour views of Rawtenstall Corporation 1947 Alexander-bodied Leyland PDIA buses Nos 38-40 (GTD 501-503) to complete my collection of colour views of each batch of the operator's post-war vehicles. I would also be interested in any views of them after 1964 with building contractors MacKenzie & Partners in the Glasgow area. Also, any views of Rawtenstall vehicles with showmen or building contractors. Please contact: Gordon Young, 4 Higher Change Villas, Bacup, Lancashire OL13 9UB. If you can help please send an e-mail to: fte630b@yahoo.co.uk.

Colour slides/photos of ex-Bournemouth (Yellow Buses) with other owners and NPSV. Please write to Arthur Day, 29 Clarence Park Road, Bournemouth BH7 6LF.

EVENTS

EVENT ORGANISERS: Please send details of your events direct to Sandra Lamb for inclusion in this column as soon as possible, and in all cases at least three months in advance of the date of the event. We regret that otherwise we cannot guarantee inclusion. E-mail presbuses2@btinternet.com or by post to 12 Redland Close, Aldermans Green Industrial Estate, Coventry, CV2 2NP.

SATURDAY 12 JANUARY

24th Annual Bus and Rail Transport Collectors' Fair at Pudsey Civic Hall, Cote Lane, Pudsey, near Leeds LS28 5TA. Open 10am to 3pm. Admission £2. The North's leading indoor event with over 100 tables selling all transport memorabilia including railwayana. Details from Barry Rennison, phone: 0113 236 3695, email: rennison@cc-email.co.uk, website: www.busandrailcollectorfairs.co.uk.

SATURDAY 9 FEBRUARY

Staines Transport Fair, The Hythe Centre, Thorpe Road, Staines TW18 3HD, Open 10.30 to 15.30. Admission £3. Free bus service from Staines Railway Station. More details from Julian Bowden, 21 Forde Avenue, Bromley BRI 3EU or phone: 07932 712268.

TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY

Bus slide show at Wellingborough Museum, Castle Way, Wellingborough NN8 1XB. Entry £3 includes free tea/coffee. Slide show by local photographers, doors open 1900. Details from Steve Loveridge, 794 Preservation Group, 75 Bakers Crescent, Irchester NN29 7BA.

SATURDAY 16 FEBRUARY

Enfield Transport Bazaar, St. Paul's Centre, 102, Church Street, Enfield EN2 6AR. Junction of Church Street, Chase Side and Windmill Hill in the heart of Enfield Town, just two minutes' walk from Enfield Chase Station (Great Northern Hertford North line) or ten minutes from Enfield Town Station (London Overground). All buses serving Enfield Town stop within five minutes' walk. Features up to forty stalls

selling all kinds of transport books, photo's, DVD's, maps, timetables, tickets and other memorabilia. Light refreshments available. Open 11.00-14.30. Admission £3 (acc. children free).

SUNDAY 24 FEBRUARY

Epping Ongar Railway Green Line Running Day. Based at the Railway's North Weald Station, routes operating to local towns and villages. Shuttle bus 718 will operate from Chingford Stn departing 10:00, at no additional cost. Route 339 will operate between Epping Stn and North Weald at regular intervals. Bus Rover tickets will be available to purchase on the day for £10 per adult and £5 per child under 14; these will allow travel on all bus routes and access to the site. Rovers can be booked online in advance via the Railway website where you will receive a reduction. Visit www.eorailway.co.uk, telephone 01277 365200 or facebook: Epping Ongar Railway for more details/tickets.

SUNDAY 24 FEBRUARY

Museum of Transport Greater Manchester. Morris Minor Show at Boyle Street, Cheetham, Manchester M8 8UW. (No museum bus to/from City Centre). Details: www.motgm.uk or 0161 205 2122.

SUNDAY 3 MARCH

Cosham Spring Transport Fair. Community Centre, Wootton Street, Cosham PO6 3AP. 10.00 - 15.30. Entry £1.50. Stalls, MBF model displays, refreshments and free bus rides. For details e-mail: vtransportgroup@btinternet.com or Facebook: Vintage Transport Group

SUNDAY 10 MARCH

Dewsbury Bus Museum Spring Running Day. Admission by programme £3 adult accompanied children free. Advance copy available for £4 by sending a cheque payable to West Riding Omnibus Museum Trust 47E Dale Street Ossett WF5 9HE. 10am - 430pm with a full day of free services and tours and now featuring a new large bus static display area. Free shuttle service from Dewsbury South Street & Railway Station to the Ravensthorpe Museum building. Up to 25 vehicles running in service and a selection of visiting buses, the Museum building full of trade stalls, Museum Café, Tombola and more. Visiting vehicles always welcome. Free feeder services usually operate to the event from Bradford, Castleford, Halifax, Huddersfield, Keighley, Leeds, Pontefract & Wakefield. For more information visit www.dewsburybusmuseum.org or our official Facebook page for final details of the feeder services. To book in a vehicle for free services please call 01924 265528.

SUNDAY 4 AUGUST 2019

Tinkers Park Bus Rally. A272, Hadlow Down, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 4HS. 10.00-16.30. Admission £7, under-16s £2. Free bus service to and from site. Free car parking. Model railway show (at least 20 layouts), narrow-gauge railway, traction engine trailer rides, transport-related stands, organ museum and on-site light refreshments. Details: www.southdownnational.com or www.tinkerspark.com.

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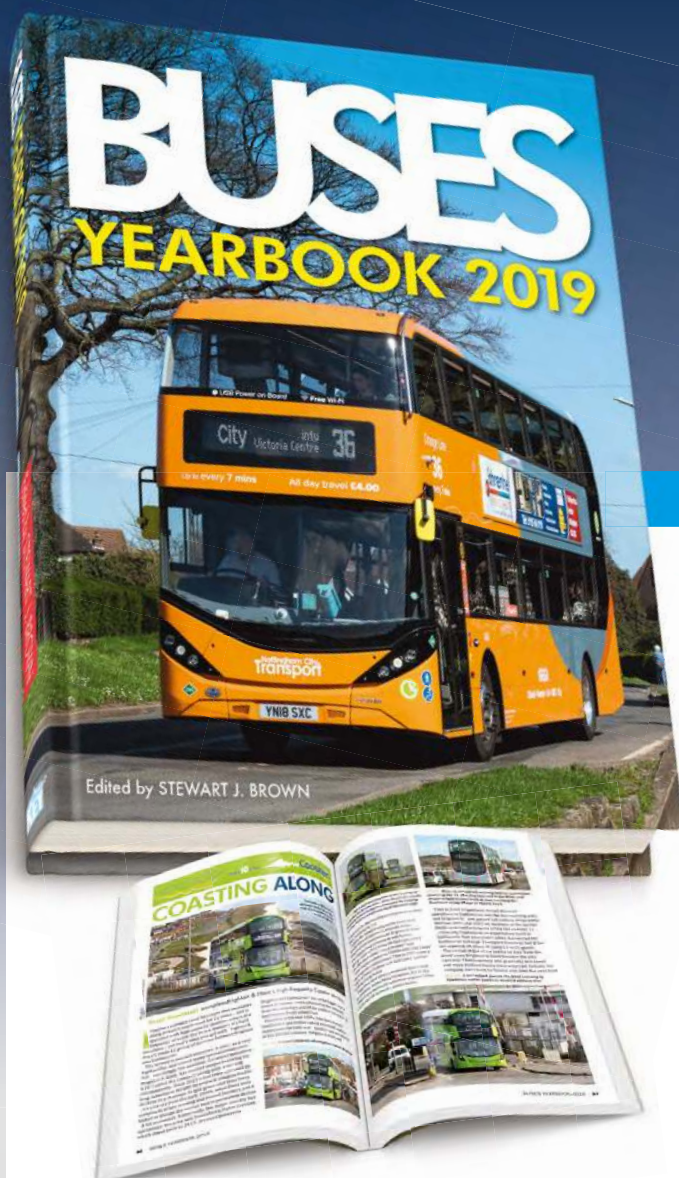
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